1: Herskovits E-4, 8 (1936) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3 Mirebalais

Davers. In 1768 and 1769 they were " but tranquil spectators of the troubles caused by the re-establishment of the militia," the local military forces numbering at this time 260 whites and 291 *affranchis*, or free men of color.[3]

This white population was made up chiefly of those who came directly from France or were born in the colony, but also included were the Acadians, one of the most interesting groups who settled in Mirebalais. Fleeing from Newfoundland, they were brought to Haiti before they were sent to Louisiana, and in the course of this migration left some of their number in the valley. It is recorded that on the 26th day of October 1764, in consequence of " a Memorial presented by the Chamber of Agriculture of Port-au-Prince, which stressed the healthfulness of Mirebalais," [4] each of a number of these Acadian families was allotted a plot of eight hundred square paces, not far from the town. The ending of this episode, however, was not happy, for, transported into a tropical climate that failed to measure up to the claims made for it, the Acadians paid so heavy a toll that soon all trace of them vanished.

But facts such as these tell little of the fundamental social and economic conditions of pre-Revolutionary Haiti, where Negro slavery constituted the foundation upon which the whole structure of life was erected. That Mirebalais was no exception to the prevailing economic regime is shown by Moreau de St. Mery's figures for the district, yet what stresses existed between the masters, the free persons of color, and the slaves, no record remains to show. Despite the fact that slaves and free men of color were accepted in the armed militia, the situation was far from tranquil. When, after the French Revolution, there were signs that the decree [5] which accorded to the free men of color political rights equal to those of the whites was in danger of being nullified in practice, it was at Mirebalais that the colored men assembled to insist on the enforcement of this order.[6] Together with some slaves they freed, they formed the nucleus of an army " that under the leader-

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

ship of a very intelligent mulatto named Bauvais" gained some successes "over the undisciplined forces in Port-au-Prince" and forced the inhabitants of the capital to recognize the power of this group by entering into a definite treaty with them.[5]

There are other indications that life in the valley did not fail to reflect the discontent of the black slaves. Writing in 1830, Mackenzie, who was the first British Consul-General to the Haitian Republic, remarked:

> "It is said by some of the best informed Haitians, that among the mountains that stretch from the neighbourhood of Mirebalais to the coast on the east of Jacmel, there is an extensive association of the descendants of the Maroon negroes, whose independence had been recognised long before the revolution by the then existing government."[6]

It is thus apparent that the institution of *marronage*, whereby runaway slaves established themselves in the mountains, in many instances living for years beyond the reach of capture and free from attack, was known in Mirebalais as it was elsewhere. Mirebalais was also not without contact with the great heroes of Haitian history. Toussaint L'Ouverture conquered and lost the town several times before it became a strategic point "from which his lieutenants, Dessalines and Christophe, menaced Arcahaie and the plain of the Cul-de-Sac."[7]

If but little has been recorded concerning Mirebalais before Haitian independence, even less is known of its later history. Mackenzie, reporting the population of Haiti district by district, gives that of Mirebalais in 1802 as 53,649; but in 1825 as only 16,037.[8] Whether the region included under the term "Mirebalais" differed at the two periods, or whether the hardships resulting from the internal strife that racked Haiti after independence had been gained took a toll of the size suggested by these figures cannot be said. That Mirebalais was an

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

important point in the warfare between the northern Empire of Christophe and the southern Republic of Pétion is well known, since the boundary between the two, never definitely fixed, might be roughly considered as the Artibonite, control of which, as always, depended on also obtaining control of the strategic hills about the town.[11] It is not possible to discover more than approximate figures for the population of Mirebalais at the present time, since no census of the district has been made, and the most recent figure of 51,000 for the commune is derived from the baptismal records in the parish church.[12]

From the earliest years of settlement of the valley, the town has been the center of its life. The government of the commune is located here; here the courts sit; and here the best schools and the only church of the district are found. Yet it is a small town, numbering less then two hundred and fifty houses, and crossed by but three principal thoroughfares stretching north and south, with ten or twelve cross-lanes. The houses on the principal streets, rectangular and small, are built of wood, plastered over with clay, painted, and roofed with sheet iron. On the outskirts of the town the roofing is of straw, or banana-leaf thatch, while the walls themselves are made of twilled wythes. No house lacks its veranda, however small, where people may be seen sitting late of an afternoon and early in the evening, but the life of the women is lived chiefly in the courtyards behind these houses that line the streets, where the cookhouses are found and the storehouses, and where all work is done. The *place*, or town square, lies at the point where the principal route between Port-au-Prince and the Dominican border turns sharply to the east. Consisting of an acre or two of cleared land, it is overgrown with weeds except when, in preparing for festive occasions, the prisoners from the town jail may be seen spending long hours, machetes in hand, cutting the grass, a few blades at a time. North of the square stands the church, a substan-

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

the baptism of their converts was followed by serious lapses from the faith, especially under conditions of stress.[79]

One of the most revolting aspects of the institution of slavery, wherever found, is the cruelty with which the suppression of human individuality is prosecuted. In this the French colony of Santo Domingo was no exception, as the list of more ingenious punishments, aside from the more usual ones such as whipping, which were devised to keep the slaves in line, demonstrates.[80] What is more important here are the defenses the Negroes built up against them. Recourse to suicide was especially common, and though the popularly accepted explanations for this range between the desire of the slave to destroy himself because he knew he was valuable property of his master, and the conviction that suicide was one way of achieving his return to the African homeland,[81] there is no reason to assume that, following African tradition, the belief that the ghost of a helpless slave could through suicide become powerful for evil and thus wreak his vengeance did not also figure.[82] But equally widespread in all the New World were the allied weapons of revolt and escape.

Both in the experience of the individual slaves and in the history of New World slavery this tendency to revolt began early. In the former case, many tales are told of how on the march to the African coast, or in the slave barracoons, or on board the slave-ship, the possibility of a desperate dash for freedom had always to be guarded against.[83] Concerning the latter, it is not generally known how early in the history of Negro slaving revolts did occur. The Negro slave-trade began with shipments of slaves to Haiti in 1510; the first slave uprising in Haiti, in 1522, thus took place only twelve years after the commencement of the traffic.[84] In the New World possessions of Spain eleven other rebellions are recorded between the years 1522 and 1553, of which those of 1533, 1537, and 1548 occurred in Santo Domingo.[85] During the following century two revolts took place, one at Port de Paix in 1679

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

and another in 1691. The object of this latter rebellion was to massacre all the whites in the district, but it was discovered before the uprising could be effective, and its leaders were executed. Still another incipient revolt in the region of Cap Français was put down in 1704.[36]

In the main, however, there were too few opportunities for united action on the part of the slaves from any considerable area to permit the idea of a general revolt to germinate and grow into action; such rebellions as occurred in the years that followed were local affairs, and were principally the result of specific abuses. Yet the fear of them was always with the planters, and of this fear the *vodun* cult, characterized by St. Mery as being potentially "a terrible weapon" in the hands of the leaders of the cult, was the symbol and crystallizing agent.[37] That there was no lack of realization of the danger to the colonists from slave uprisings is made clear in letters of the period written to France; as early as 1685 M. de Cussy, reporting to the Minister of Colonies in Paris, stated: "In the Negroes we possess a formidable domestic enemy," while a hundred years later an officer of the armies of the King who was also a plantation-owner in Haiti expressed the opinion that "a colony of slaves is a city under constant threat of assault; there one walks on barrels of powder."[38]

More frequently, however, the expression of protest took the form of *marronage*, of running away to the hills, a phenomenon not restricted to Haiti, since in other regions of the New World, notably Jamaica and Dutch Guiana, the runaways maintained themselves so successfully that they were accorded their independence by formal recognition, as was also done in Haiti in 1784.[39] Figures on the extent to which slaves made off into the mountains tell the measure of their desperation; in 1720 alone, a thousand Negroes gained their freedom in this manner; in 1751, at least 3,500. Some of the leaders of these bands were men of great ability, and the depredations they engaged in caused serious losses to the planters

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

in the regions where they operated. The most renowned was Macandal, a "Guinea" Negro, who was finally apprehended and executed in 1758.[40] His name lives today in Haitian peasant tradition, where folkloristic versions of his exploits as one of the earliest of the liberators are still recounted. The pages in St. Mery which tell how the strength of the bands in the mountains behind Croix-des-Bouquets necessitated a constant augmentation of the militia on duty there, is additional evidence of the success of these runaways. The same author's description of a group operating in the parish of Jacmel, found in 1785 to number among its members men more than fifty years of age who had been born in the freedom of the mountains, shows how long the escaped Negroes were able to maintain themselves without capture.[41]

The very tradition of *marronage* was important. Psychologically, it held out to the slaves a hope, more than ephemeral, of escaping their servitude, and in consequence allowed them to maintain an attitude of mind that kept many of them from becoming a prey to despair. From the point of view of the growth of Haitian culture, moreover, the groups of runaway slaves offered a ready means for the continuation of African traditions and patterns of behavior. Though but few descriptions of the manner of life led by the fugitives in their mountain encampments are to be had, it is apparent that in order to maintain confidence in their own powers of resisting capture and re-enslavement the runaways guarded assiduously all memory of African belief and practice, while even in the material aspects of their existence they tended to revert to aboriginal modes of life. Finally, however, and most important for the future course of Haitian history, was the training of these runaways obtained in the ways of warfare, and the continuation of the warrior tradition among the Negroes. This is one of the reasons why in 1791, when Boukman and his followers stirred the first general slave revolt in the north, the blacks were ready; also when in the course of

A: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

the development of European history the French Revolution sharpened the latent antagonisms between the various classes of whites in the colony, between the whites and the free persons of color, and between masters and slaves, the way had been prepared for the operations of the great military geniuses, Toussaint, Dessalines, and Christophe, through whose leadership the freedom of Haiti was finally achieved.

It is not necessary here to give, even in outline, the course of Haitian history during this period of rebellion and afterwards, when Haiti was welded into a single Republic, for this has been often recounted.[42] Nor is it of importance here to continue the well-known political history of the Republic, with its many rebellions, and its wars with the Spanish portion of the island that finally resulted in the formation of the Republic of Santo Domingo; with the brief existence of the "empire" of Faustin I; and with the culmination of this history in what has been called a period of anarchy that brought about the occupation, so recently terminated, of Haiti by the American Marines.[43] Other questions, which concern the social history of independent Haiti, have been given less attention, and only tantalizing hints of their answers appear in the writings of those who have treated of the developing country. How were the impulses toward the mingling of Haitian and French aspects of culture, set in motion during the period of slavery, working out during this time? What influences dominated the scene, once the whites had been finally eliminated? What mechanisms permitted the African traditions brought by the slaves to hold their vitality? It is as through a haze that one glimpses the inner development of Haitian culture after independence; and the glimpses are the dimmer when comparison is made with the many clear and detailed descriptions of the earlier life of the island.

It is only by a close reading of the works of such travelers and foreign officials as Hanna, Mackenzie, St. John, and Hazard, that any information of this kind can be obtained. The

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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gatory on those who are possessed by *loa* who go unharmed in fire, it is said: "It is the *loa* that go into the fire. The soul is another thing."

All agree that the dead do not possess folk in the manner of the *loa*, as might be expected from the fact that the most important rituals in the cult of the dead are not only dominated by the Church, but carried out by its priest. In the matter of consulting the dead when questions of importance for the family are involved, however, there is no consensus of opinion. The most widespread point of view holds that only those dead whose *loa* have not been removed from their heads can be summoned, and that this is done only to permit them to "go to God," so their souls may be at rest. Otherwise, "when the dead are called, it is a matter of magic, for the dead are never good and one always must fear them." And though a Mait' 'Bitation that is an old, old ancestor may "mount the head" of a member of the family, he would never be specially called and in most cases, if he did come, would be "restrained." On the other hand, it was recounted how during the Caco rebellion the soul of Dessalines was brought into a jar and asked for his counsel. It is said, however, that he was so angered at the consistent defeats sustained by the Haitians that he struck everyone to earth and roundly scolded them for having lost the liberty with which he endowed them, departing without giving the desired advice. And since the spirits of Christophe and Toussaint are believed to be even stronger, no one had sufficient courage to summon them!

The immediate nature of the relation between the dead and the living is best seen in the conventions and attitudes surrounding the wearing of mourning, which is required of all children of the deceased, whether "legitimate" or otherwise. Black is worn twelve months for a father, eighteen months for a mother; and half-mourning — black and white — is worn for a sister, brother, cousin, uncle, or aunt. In the country, before full mourning is put on, the black cloth is

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Hait SV3

presidents, and emphatically declared the army to be within and under the law.

The new President, finding his office without the prerogatives he had expected it to have, openly complained of the restraints imposed on him by the new constitution. He broke campaign promises he had made to the peasants in the south and stirred up antagonisms on every side. Finally, while he was on a military expedition in the Spanish part of the island, revolution broke out at home. His army was beaten by the Dominicans, too, which completely shattered his morale. He fled by ship to Jamaica, the traditional refuge of outgoing Haitian presidents. In memory of his administration the peasants sang:

Rivière Président gainyain zyeux vairon!
Li dit l'ap piyé l'armé Bélanton!
Piyé lévé trésor!
Piyé lévé trésor!
Piyé lévé trésor!
Yo voyé Lambam depuis Lowinsor!

La Constitution cé trouva Colombe
Quand yo voit pays soufri trop misère!
Li dit yo fait comme Henry!
Li dit yo fait comme Henry!
Li dit yo fait comme Henry!
Pou' fai sang coulé pou' rangé pays!

Colonel Déro soldat Diplaro
Marché fanfaron comme un grand fantin!
Li cré qui li té roi!
Li cré qui li té roi!
Li cré qui li té roi!
'Pagnol chasse li, li couri con chien qui prend frai charogne!

President Rivière was cross-eyed!
He said that he was going to pillage Belanton's army!
Loot for treasure!
Loot for treasure!
Loot for treasure!
They sent everyone from Lowinsor to Lambam!

The Constitution was founded by Columbus
When the country suffered too much misery!
He said he would do like Henry [Christophe]!
He said he would do like Henry!
He said he would do like Henry!
Make blood run to poison the countryside!

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

From Colonel Déro to Private Diplaro,
They marched with fanfare, a great army of foot soldiers!
He thought that he was king!
He thought that he was king!
He thought that he was king!
The Spaniards chased him, he ran like a dog after fresh carrion!

Forty-five years later, in 1888, there was a big political rally in Port-au-Prince. The two presidential candidates were General Séide Télémaque and Déus Légitime. Their supporters clashed near the palace, and Télémaque was killed in an exchange of gunfire. Légitime naturally was accused of having murdered his rival, though his supporters would not believe that he had committed such a crime. Evidence for a trial was entirely lacking, and Déus Légitime became president. But feeling ran high, and the followers of Télémaque began to sing:

Écoutez chers amis l'histoire de Légitime!
Assassin de Séide, et lui est président!
Écoutez bien l'histoire, le gens du nord marchaient
Sur Port-au-Prince un fois pou' vengé la mort de Séide!
Allez au diable, bandit Déus!
Échappez vous, ingrat Déus!
Si vous perdre le temps, Déus,
Florvil vous feura fusillé!

Listen my friends to the story of Légitime!
Assassin of Séide, and he is President!
Listen well to the story, the people of the north will march
On Port-au-Prince one day to avenge the death of Séide!
Go to the devil, bandit Déus!
Escape, ingrate Déus!
If you lose time, Déus,
Florvil will have you shot!

Légitime had this possibility clearly in his mind. And the next year, when Florvil Gélin Hippolyte marched from the north with an army of *cacos* (peasant troops who hired out to political aspirants), Légitime hurriedly boarded a steamer in the harbor and sailed for Jamaica. Séide Télémaque was considered avenged, as the army bugles still bear witness. For now when the bugle plays reveille it is supposed to be saying:

Séide Télémaque, Légitime has fled!
Séide Télémaque, Légitime has fled!

The new President, Florvil Hippolyte, died in office in 1896. J. N. Leger, a Haitian historian, tells soberly of Hippolyte's end in the following words.

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

643'
533*
539*

Alexis Nord, c'un bon Papa!
Ou pas metté ou pas manyien!
Pinga ou manyien, pinga ou manyien!
Pinga ou manyien Alexis Nord! [Ex. 115]

Alexis Nord, Papa,
It is God who put you there!
Take care of those
Who wish to make trouble for you!

Alexis Nord is a good papa!
You didn't put him there, you can't take him away!
Don't try to remove him, don't try to remove him!
Don't try to remove Alexis Nord!

Nord Alexis remained as president until 1909. He was then more than eighty years old, and he planned to turn the government over to General Jean-Gilles, who would carry on the policies of the administration. But Antoine Simon, an assembly delegate from the south, had other plans. He marched on Port-au-Prince with an army of three hundred cacos, who sang:

175
643
669 ●

[533]*
[539]*

Tonton oh cher, Antoine pas nen betise oh!
L'apprend l'armée du sud, cher,
L'a fai ou marché zigzag!
Débor débor débor!
Nèg' Nord mandé fusillé!
Débor débor débor!
Nég' Nord mandé corigé!

Dear Uncle, Antoine is not joking!
He brings the army of the south, my friend,
He will make you go zigzag.
Débor débor débor! *
Nord's men are asking for gunfire!
Débor débor débor!
Nord's men are asking for a lesson!

After Nord Alexis had vacated the palace and embarked for Jamaica, Antoine Simon became president. Historians often refer to the period that followed as the "Epoch of Ephemeral Presidents." Simon was not in the palace long before a man named Cincinnatus Leconte was successfully stirring up a new caco movement in the north, and people were singing:

[533]*
[539]*

* Probably "outlawed."

2; Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

175
643
669
691
533
539

Antoine Simon pressé oh pou' allé!
Ou pas tendé l'armée Leconte Gonaïves? [Ex. 116]

Antoine Simon, you'd better leave!
Haven't you heard Leconte's army is at Gonaïves?

In August, 1912, Leconte marched on the capital, and Antoine Simon sailed for Jamaica. General Leconte was duly elected to the presidency; but less than a year after he took office a terrific explosion wrecked the palace, killing Leconte, his son, and a number of militia. It was believed by many that this disaster was an act of vengeance by Antoine Simon:

Clairon sonnin, m'mandé ça qui gainyain
C'est Chapuzette qui débordé encore.
Maribaroux min li vini encore,
Ça'l vin' chaché, li vin' mandé revanche.

Nan Ouanaminthe fusil pas té tiré,
Qui raison ça pou' yo té fait pillage?
Bourriques, mulet' jusqu'à feuilles tôle, Chapuzette,
Tout ça passé au prix de trois centimes.

Machetes Leconte pis raide passé jalap,
C'est avec ça Chapuzette bai médicine.
Si ou vlé conné comment bai "vent-main-nez,"
Mandé Oreste avec Antoine Simon.

Antoine Simon té dit avant'l parti,
Li ta va quitté yun bomb nan mitan yo.
Lè l'éclatté, lè-à la va Kingston,
La marré rein'l pou'l ri peuple souvrain.

Aux Cayes du Fond m'tendé Mapou Simon,
Nan Léogane m'tendé Mapou Danpisse.
Lè nou rivé na wè ça qui gainyain,
Couis couvri couis, Antoine viré sou dos.

REFRAIN

Honneur à Chapuzette, St. Juste avec Delphin,
Ducasse et Corvoisier, vive Cincinattus.

The bells ring, I ask what is going on?
It is Chapuzette now who has revolted.
But Maribaroux he comes again,
What he is looking for is revenge.

In Ouanaminthe the guns are quiet,
What was the reason for this pillage?
They have carried off the donkeys, mules, and even the iron roofing,
Everything that was worth more than three centimes.

2: Courlander B-6 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

Levoute's soldiers are stronger than a *jalap*.*
It is with them that Chapuzette gives medicine.
If you want to know how to give the "stomach-hand-nose" †
Ask Oreste and Antoine Simon.

Antoine Simon said before he left
That he would leave a bomb in the middle of the palace.
When it went off he was already in Kingston.
He will pay for laughing at a sovereign people.

In Aux Cayes du Fond, I heard of the Mapou Simon,
In Léogane I heard of the Mapou Dampisse
When we arrive there we'll see what will happen.
Bowl covers bowl, ‡ Antoine will turn over on his back.

REFRAIN

Honor to Chapuzette, St. Juste and Delphin,
Ducasse and Corvoisier, long live Cincinnatus.

Two more presidents—Tancrede Auguste and Michele Oreste—divided the next eighteen months between them. Two caco movements to remove Oreste started simultaneously, one under the leadership of Davilmar Théodore, the other under the Zamor brothers, Charles and Oreste. The Zamor cacos first chased Théodore's army into the mountains and then marched on the capital. Oreste Zamor was elected to the presidency on a reform program, which quickly evaporated into thin air. One song describes the arrival of the President's brother Charles and his "Réform" at the gates of Port-au-Prince, where a crowd of enthusiasts had gathered:

Attention la Réform c'est jeunes jens Port-au-Prince,
C'est jeunes jens Port-au-Prince, la Réform viré dos ba yo.
Yo lèvé Mardi bon matin, l'habillé tout en blanc,
L'habillé tout en blanc pou' y'al entré Charles Zamor.
Al entren Port-au-Prince la Réform débordé,
La Réform débordé, la Réform viré dos ba yo.

Hail the Reform! It is the young men of Port-au-Prince,
The young men of Port-au-Prince, and the Reform turns its back on them.
They arose early Tuesday morning, dressed all in white,
They dressed all in white to meet Charles Zamor.
At the gates of Port-au-Prince the Reform reversed itself,
The Reform reversed itself and turned its back on them.

The Zamors and the reform administration held the palace less than nine months before Davilmar Théodore's cacos were marching on the capital singing the song that other presidents had heard.

* A violent purgative.
† That is, upset stomach, hand on the nose.
‡ That is, force replies to force.

2: Courlander B-5 (1837-1958) 1960 SV3 Hait SV3

175 643 669 533 539

Oreste Zamor, pressé pou' embarké!
Oreste Zamor, pressé pou' embarké!
Ou pas tendé l'armée Davilmar rentré pou' Gonaïves?

Oreste Zamor, you'd better embark!
Oreste Zamor, you'd better embark!
Haven't you heard Davilmar's army has entered Gonaïves?

Gonaïves seems to have been the crucial point for invading armies from the north. Whenever revolutionary troops entered this town, the president holding office prepared to leave. True to the tradition, the Zamors sailed for a foreign shore, and Davilmar Théodore became the new executive. Although his tenure was to last only three months, there was much excitement when he entered the capital:

A la théatre, à la bamboche!
Pou' djolle musique à droit à gauche!
La ville embrende ça qui gainyain,
C'est Davilmar kapé rentré!
Davilmar, dur, dur!
Manchete caco pas nen betise!
Papa Da dur, dur!
Manchete Leconte pas nen betise!
Davilmar, dur, dur!

Celebrations and dancing!
Tooting horns to right and left!
The city is in an uproar,
It is Davilmar who is coming in!
Davilmar, hard, hard!
The cacos were nothing to laugh at!
Papa Da is hard, hard!
Leconte's army was nothing to laugh at!
Davilmar is hard, hard!

175 648 [662]

In 1915 came the United States intervention in Haiti, with the prime objective of freezing out German commercial and political interests. A president named Guillaume Sam had assassinated his political enemies in the prison at Port-au-Prince and had, in turn, been dragged out of the French consulate and killed. The benefits of the American occupation of Haiti are hotly debated to this day, though it is about thirty years since the United States military forces were withdrawn. Some Haitians think the occupation was a good lesson in politics, and that Haiti benefited in many ways. Others continue to look upon it as an overt expression of American diplomacy by force. One of the early assignments of the U.S. Marines in Haiti was the destruction of the

2: Courlander 8-6 (1937-1965) 1968 8V3 Haiti 8V3

roaming bands of cacos, generally regarded as bandit elements. Caco chiefs were imprisoned or killed as outlaws, though much of their activity was directed against the American occupation rather than the civil government. Many of the injustices of the occupation were the result of inadequate understanding of the Haitian people and their way of life. There was much unspoken bitterness against the occupation forces, and in some popular songs the Marines were referred to by the peaceful peasantry as "cacos in khaki." During President Borno's administration the people in the north were singing:

Grand Prevost ou pas tendé cacos Bayé Bouteille?
Grand Prevost n'allé wè cacos Bayé Bouteille!
Ala kilé nen dé nations:
Americains dévant, cacos deuxième!

Grand Prevost, didn't you hear the cacos are at the Bottle Gate?
Grand Prevost, we are going to see the cacos at the Bottle Gate!
Now we have two species:
The Americans are the worst, the cacos come second!

When President Borno's tenure of office came to an end, it was felt in some quarters that Madame Borno was taking the prospective change of residence very hard:

Madame Borno ça ou gainyain ou apé crié?
Ou té tou conné palais a parti pou' ou!
Madame Borno ça ou gainyain ou apé crié?
Ou té tou conné yun jour pou' oté laissé!

Madame Borno, what is the matter, why are you crying?
You always knew one day you would have to leave the palace!
Madame Borno, what is the matter, why are you crying?
You always knew one day you'd have to give it up!

In 1930 Sténio Vincent came into office. He was a generally unpopular executive who managed to hold on to the presidency by suppressing the political opposition. When he was elected, the progressives were hopeful, and his supporters were singing: "Sténio Vincent bon garçon." But public sentiment shifted. Times were hard for the Haitian people during the Vincent administration. The darker citizens felt Vincent was "too light" to have their interests at heart. They were violently aroused, too, by his gingerly handling of the massacre of Haitians in the Dominican Republic in 1937. During his administration there were a number of abortive caco demonstrations and an unsuccessful revolt of high-ranking army officers. But in the early days a Meringue

2: Courlander 9-6 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

of "Merci Papa Vincent" sprang up in the side streets of Port-au-Prince. One rendition (as translated) went: 175 178 643 533* 539*

We know the man who loves the people,
He is Sénio Vincent!
Who made my wife leave me to go to her family?
He is Président Vincent!
Who made my skin show through my worn out pants?
He is Président Vincent!
Who is the man who made my house fall down?
He is Président Vincent!
Oh, we call out, thank you, Papa Vincent!

So widespread did the burlesques on the original become that the tune itself became suspect. One never knew which versions were running through the minds of the listeners.

In 1950, during the administration of President Estimé, there was a new public works program which provided employment for a good many needy people in the Port-au-Prince area, and a coumbite song of the period went: 175 643 533* 539* [653]

Président Estimé waille, oh!
Quemblé pays yà pas laguè oh!
C'est Bondieu nans ciel là qui ba moin président!
C'est Bondieu nans ciel là qui ba moin président cila!
Quemblé pays yà pas laguè oh!
Port-au-Prince oh tourné Havane oh! [Ex. 117]

President Estimé *waille*, oh!
Hold on to the country, don't let go, oh!
It is God in heaven who gave me this president!
It is God in heaven who gave me this president!
Hold on to the country, don't let go, oh!
Port-au-Prince, oh, is turning into a Havana, oh!

When Estimé was overthrown by a military coup, the melody lingered on, but the name of the protagonist was changed. [669]

No president of Haiti has served his term of office, either for good or bad, without providing the raw materials for a folk song. His heroic deeds, his failures, and his foibles are as likely as not to be perpetuated in the music of the people. 643 533*

As for the presidency itself, it is held in the highest esteem. A rousing salute song, reminiscent of the Marseillaise, sends every new president-elect on the way to the palace: [539]*

Président passé là,
L'ap monté au gouvernement!

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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Leyburn noted that the United States occupation affected the nature and rigidity of the barriers separating the yeomanry from the elite. For instance, he calls attention to the fact that the presidents elected during the United States occupation were light-skinned members of the elite. It seemed almost inevitable that, when the North Americans sought men through whom to prosecute their plans for "stabilizing" Haiti, they would settle on educated and worldly politicians, men who were both sufficiently trained and sufficiently pliant for the task. That these men were predominantly light-skinned was a corollary aspect of Haitian social history. In this way Washington played some part in reinforcing and expanding elite power; and herein lies a paradox with which the author of *The Haitian People* has dealt well. While the elite had been able to maintain their wealth and power in Haiti for nearly a century, the presidential succession before the United States occupation had largely been one of military chieftains, principally dark-skinned men from the north of the Republic. Michel Oreste, who had ruled for nine months in 1913–14, was the first civilian to be chosen president in Haiti's entire history up to that time; and Sudre Dartiguenave (1915–22), the North Americans' choice, was the first president since 1879 who was both a southerner and light-skinned. From the last quarter of the nineteenth century until the occupation, in other words, Haiti's presidents were almost entirely dark-skinned northern provincial leaders who literally seized power by invading Port-au-Prince and deposing their predecessors.

Hence, in describing the separation between elite and yeomanry, it is essential to notice the traditional special role of the military, with its particular overtones of color. Here was one institutional feature of Haitian society which was not directly dominated by the elite, and through which nonelite folk were able to attain special power. But in Haiti's case it is significant that the army itself was not firmly institutionalized; regional warlords, rather than a centralized officer corps, made the decisions. Leyburn cites Auguste Magloire, who enumerated *sixty-nine* "important" revolutions between 1806 and 1879; had this enumeration gone forward, it would have been much longer. Of Haiti's twenty-four chief executives between 1807 and 1915, only eight were in office for a period equal to their elected terms, and seventeen were deposed by revolution. Before the United States occupation, then, the continuing power of the elite could be seen as somewhat separate from the succession of nonelite generals who seized office over the years.

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The financing of these many revolutions was usually provided by foreign merchants, bent upon installing a government that would grant them special economic concessions (Munro, 1964:326–31). The United States occupation ended this doleful succession of regimes and, by throwing its weight to the elite, by suppressing military activity in the countryside, and by reforming the army, the United States gave a new meaning to the separation of the elite and the yeomanry. Leyburn's interpretation is consistent with these events; yet some Haitian scholars have differed with Leyburn's analysis.

In a lengthy review article, the dean of Haitian historians, Dr. Jean Price-Mars (1942:1–50), questions the applicability of the term "caste" to the social groupings of Haitian society. He notes that Haitian law after the revolution never legitimized any distinction on grounds of physical type, unlike a society such as the United States—that in fact, the very basis of Haitian polity was the absence of such distinctions. Furthermore, Leyburn's interpretation is qualified by the fact that the elite and the rural masses are not entirely distinctive physically. In some parts of rural Haiti, particularly in the southern peninsula, there are many light-skinned people; and many individuals who qualify as members of the elite on all other counts are very dark in appearance. The fact that being "Negro" or "white" in Haiti is viewed as a matter of degree, rather than of kind, complicated by all the other criteria of social position employed in drawing distinctions, has important implications for the way social barriers have operated in that country.*

Leyburn did not contend that all the effects of the United States occupation were in the direction of increasing the gap between the ELITE AND THE YEOMANRY.

* In this regard, Haiti is aligned with most of Latin America, in contradistinction to the United States, where many persons believe that "one drop of Negro blood" [sic] makes a "Negro." The failure of North Americans to distinguish between sociological and genetic categories of physical type has led to considerable confusion in their dealings with Latin America and in their understanding of Latin American societies. North American race prejudice at its most extreme sees color as the primary basis for social ranking, and no individual accomplishment (for instance, in terms of economic or intellectual success) can overshadow the inferior status unalterably bestowed by certain physical traits. Haitian—and generally all Latin American—social distinctions do not rest solely on considerations of physical type; a black skin does not "doom" an individual if his attainments make him otherwise the equal of his lighter-skinned fellow citizens. Hence, it might be argued that the term "caste" would be more appropriate when applied to the Negro people of the United States (regardless of phenotype, and including those "Negroes" who are *sociologically* identified with the Negro people even if their physical appearance is dramatically Caucasian) than when applied to the peoples of Latin America.

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175 These newcomers in the class structure enjoyed regular urban em-
565 ployment, were mostly literate and legally married, and harbored strong ambitions for the education of their children. Such persons were certainly not elite members, and their behavior (as, for instance, in their preference for speaking Creole rather than French) showed it; yet they were not part of the rural masses, nor merely an example of Marx's *Lumpenproletariat*. Yet significance of this new group for the Leyburn "caste" theory of the elite is considerable. Even today, if such persons lapse into poverty, their ideology will continue to
[467] matter politically. Estimé's regime also loosed new political trends,
[362] since at first some encouragement was given to labor unions, and the construction of urban low-cost housing was undertaken. We are unable to measure the long-term effects of these changes, but their reality raises some questions about the rigidity that Leyburn's analysis imputed to Haitian social structure.

175 In May 1950, after an unsuccessful bid to extend his term of office
669 illegally, Estimé's regime was toppled, again by a military junta. To
643 power came Paul Magloire, the first military figure to become chief
159 executive since the start of the United States occupation. Like Estimé before him, Magloire symbolized certain effects of the occupation upon Haiti's social and political structure and the way that structure was continuing to change. Magloire's origins were not within the elite, to judge by the traditional criteria. He was a black man, and from the north; born in Quartier Morin, he associated himself with the elite of the north coast port of Cap Haïtien, Haiti's second largest city. By marriage to a "Capoise," whose family status was much higher than his own, and by a successful career in the military during the occupation, Magloire penetrated elite circles. As commander of the Palace Guard, he had been a member of the junta that ousted Lescot in 1946, replacing him with Estimé. In 1950, when Magloire became president, after the army had forcibly discharged both houses of the legislature, he apparently had the support of the elite and of the business class, if not of the popular forces that had backed Estimé.

175 Magloire may be said to have moderated considerably the intensity
643 of Haitian politics, and his administration was not marked by so sharp an ideological concern with the relative roles of elite and countryman. Times were good, and levels of life, both in the countryside
[433] and in the capital, were probably as high as they had been at any time in Haitian history. Certain economic gains were made in the tourist

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industry, in the processing of essential oils, in extractive operations (bauxite, copper), and in the manufacture of a few essential commodities. The official attitude toward private investment, even by foreigners, was unusually benign; and coffee, the big export crop, enjoyed a boom. Again, however, little effect could be seen in the basic economic structure. By 1956–57, when the Magloire regime was toppled, the era of apparent prosperity had come to an end.

Magloire's tenure ended as had his predecessor's; after a vain attempt to prolong his regime by forcing through new laws, he was brought down by the army and was succeeded by a series of juntas. The politics of the brief interregnum preceding the accession of François Duvalier was complicated by the rival claims of four presidential aspirants: Clément Jumelle, Daniel Fignolé, Louis Déjoie, and François Duvalier. These four men represented significantly different trends in Haitian thinking and were supported by different social groups. Jumelle, although regarded as the spiritual inheritor of the Magloire administration, won the support of many Haitian intellectuals; his appeal was partly grounded in his experience as finance minister in the Magloire cabinet, but the scandalous graft of the Magloire administration worked against him. Fignolé, too, had been a cabinet minister, but his antecedents and political philosophy differed sharply from Jumelle's. An eloquent, intense man of rural lower-class origins, Fignolé was regarded by many as a dangerous demagogue. His support came largely from the poorer urban classes, and his reputation as a union leader and as a "self-made" former minister of education gave him special strength among urban groups. Déjoie, considered to be the candidate of most of the business community and of the elite, was a highly successful agronomist and businessman who had done much to build rural industry; it is also generally believed that Déjoie was the "unofficial candidate" of the United States. Duvalier, trained as a doctor of medicine and for long an enthusiastic amateur ethnologist, had been a political enemy of the Magloire regime and, as a former minister in the Estimé cabinet, saw himself as the ideological descendant of Estimé. Duvalier appears eventually to have become the army's choice, ostensibly because he was considered "manageable"; at any rate, it was Duvalier who finally emerged as president, ending the uneasy interim which followed Magloire's ejection.*

* Probably the most penetrating analysis of Haitian politics of the time is that provided by Mecklin, 1964, to which this interpretation owes much.

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regime. That President Duvalier has been able to stay in power in spite of internal dissaffection, sometime hostile United States propaganda, a dire economic situation, personal ill health, and other woes, is a tribute to his political acumen, if not to his principles. None of this means, of course, that such consummate skill will continue to work; Haitian governments have a way of falling suddenly, and the Duvalier regime will probably not prove an exception.

Dr. Duvalier's success indicates that he has made certain correct assessments, not only of Haiti's social and political structure but also of United States policy with regard to Haiti. The occupation was notable for its failure to make any telling alterations in the economic structure or level of development of the country. Many beneficial changes were made, as Leyburn demonstrates, particularly in the areas of health and health services, communications, government administration, education, and transport (though the use of corvée labor on the roads led to serious abuses, and stimulated sanguinary guerilla warfare). But most significantly, the United States institutionalized the army and police forces. The ragged bands of political mercenaries of the past were dissolved; the officer-ridden army was transformed into a small, well-trained, and well-organized force. Eventual firm control by this force of weaponry, communications, and transport ended the era of presidential succession by invasion, turned the army into the major locus of nonelectoral, president-making power, and may have ended forever the possibility of an agrarian revolt against the central authority. Another political effect of the occupation was the importance it imparted to the United States ambassador, whose political opinions thereafter would matter significantly in the transmission of power at the top of the Haitian governmental system. The Duvalier regime has continuously taken full account of the consequences of United States interest; and its leaders have been able to watch the operation of that interest in the political events occurring between the fall of the Lescot government and the present.

In the view of one acute observer, President Duvalier, in order to consolidate his power, had to cope with three other loci of political strength in addition to the army and the United States ambassador. The business community, located for the most part in Port-au-Prince, had strongly supported Déjoie's candidacy during the interregnum; its leaders were mainly members of the elite, and many had strong

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175 24 567 equaled the demand for them; in 1791 the census listed half a million then living, but no writer seems to have even a vague idea of how many millions were imported during the sixty years of the colony's heyday.

175 245 249 433 511 565 Production, particularly of sugar and coffee, steadily increased until the tiny colony ranked among the wealthiest regions of the world. The Spanish Indies were declining, so that Saint-Domingue alone far outranked them all combined between 1766 and 1791. Splendid roads were built, extensive irrigation projects developed, and stately mansions erected. Life moved along with ceremony and display—for the planters; attended by their black lackeys, the white French masters entertained royally or were driven like lords in their coaches to make formal visits to neighbors. Many of these well-to-do colonials spent half their time in Paris, ostentatiously spending their riches. To be "wealthy as a Creole" came to be a common expression in France.[1] Perhaps nowhere in the Americas was existence at once so delightful and so ornamental as it was for the wealthy planters among the 36,000 whites of Saint-Domingue in 1791.

175 439 505 648 For the mother country, too, this small bit of tropical land was profitable during the latter days of Bourbon royalty. Neither Martinique nor Guadeloupe could compare with it in value. In 1789 nearly two thirds of the foreign commercial interests of France centred in Saint-Domingue; its combined exports and imports were valued at more than $140,000,000; its sugar, coffee, indigo, and cotton supplied the home market and employed in prosperous years more than 700 ocean-going vessels, with as many as 80,000 seamen.[2]

175 565 669 Where wealth exists, social distinctions generally develop. In Saint-Domingue the evolving class system produced such discord that sparks from the French Revolution eventually set off an explosion in the colony. Casual surveys of Haitian history generally record that in 1791 the slaves revolted, and that out of this insurrection grew the war of independence. This is true; but it was not the resentment of slaves against their masters which caused the final explosion; the slaves were tinder used by others to keep the conflagration burning.

175 565 [567] Negro slaves, of course, did not figure in the "class" system; they were below the classes of colonial society. The class system, properly

[101] 1. The word "creole" means only "colonial born"; there is no connotation of race mixture in the term.

2. Pamphile de Lacroix, *Mémoires*, II, 277.

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nature.[9] Colored women were forbidden in 1768 to marry white men. In 1779 began a series of laws designed to humiliate the colored person in public: his clothes must be of a different material and cut from the white person's; he must be indoors by nine o'clock in the evening; he might not sit in the same section of churches and theatres with whites."[10]

Just at the moment when prejudice and hatred seem to have reached their most menacing proportions, when even moderate white planters began to feel that such passions had been aroused among both white and colored folk that only brutal severity could hold them in check, the Revolution began in France. Both sides in the colony hoped to make use of it. The whites saw in the mother country's confusion an opportunity to win self-government for the colony—with themselves, of course, as the untrammeled rulers. The gens de couleur, taking to heart the noble Declaration of the Rights of Man, hoped to regain their full rights as French citizens, guaranteed to them in Louis XIV's Code, but now in abeyance.

During the fateful years 1788 to 1793 colonial affairs were intertwined with developments in France. Men and messages went back and forth between Cap Français and Paris, following the startling announcement that after a lapse of 150 years the States-General would be convoked in May, 1789. At a meeting of the colonial assembly in September, 1788, called to nominate delegates, the group of grands blancs who controlled colonial affairs decided on two daring steps, which later proved to be blunders: first, they named thirty-seven deputies to represent Saint-Domingue; second, they drew up a *Cahier des Doléances*—a list of grievances whose sole palliation, it was implied, would be the granting of permission to the white planters to govern the colony without interference from France. These two decisions, be it said, were not unanimously approved in the assembly at Cap Français; cautious minds warned against pretentious demands which might do nothing more than attract concentrated attention to the state of affairs in Saint-Domingue: it might be wiser, they argued, to let sleeping dogs lie, and ignore the convocation of the States-General. The cautious were outvoted.

9. A colored lawyer might win a case against a white man; a colored priest might have to hear the confession of a white woman.

10. When certain mulattoes arrived at church in Cap Français wearing clothes of the same texture as the whites', constables tore the garments from the backs of male and female alike, leaving them "with no other veil than their shame."

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Noirs, having returned to Saint-Domingue to campaign for the political rights of his group, led with his friend Chavanne a demonstration at Cap Français. The white authorities seized and executed them with notable brutality.

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This occurred in March, 1791. In May came the news that the National Assembly in France had finally yielded to pressure, and had decreed that men of mixed blood born of free parents should be admitted to representation in colonial assemblies. The chagrin and anger of the whites at this decree was so violent that the governor-general of Saint-Domingue immediately suspended its operation.

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The issue was now clearly drawn: free colored men knew that they would never secure their rights except by force. But before they could bring to maturity their plan of action, suddenly the calculations of both parties were completely upset. The Negro slaves revolted.

If ever slaves had reason to rebel, the Negroes of Saint-Domingue did. The same harshness which the whites showed to free colored people marked the treatment of black slaves; and as racial antagonism deepened, white masters seemed to become utterly heartless in their treatment of the inarticulate blacks. Allowing for the exceptions which accompany most generalizations, it is clear from the record that the planters were, in the main, callous, ruthless, some of them even fiendish, in their treatment of slaves. Flogging a man to death was not uncommon; certain slaves were buried alive; pregnant women were forced to work so hard that miscarriage resulted. Some of the punishments meted out were merely brutal; others were torture; and some were sadistic, the masters relishing the pain they were causing. A certain slave in the North was nailed by his hands to a wall, and then, after standing all day in the burning sun, was made to eat his own amputated ears. A woman planter had the tongues of all her slaves cut out; another woman caused the starvation of her maid by having a gag fixed around the child's head.[13] Visitors to the colony in the 1780's often commented on the general want of self-control on the part of the planters—their violent gusts of anger and passionate outbreaks over trifles; and the victims of these outbursts

13. An officer of the court of the Negro king Christophe later wrote in two volumes a gruesome account of the treatment of slaves by French masters in the latter days of the colony. Although certainly exaggerated, it probably contains a measure of truth. See Baron de Vastey, *Réflexions politiques sur les noirs et les blancs* (Sans Souci, 1817); and *Essai sur les causes de la révolution et des guerres civiles d'Hayti* (Sans Souci, 1819).

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were the slaves. Most of the blacks accordingly needed only leadership to arouse them and direct their vengeance. 175 567 669

Very little of the background of the insurrection is known. The certain facts are these: on the night of August 14, 1791, at a pretended Vodun ceremony in the woods of the Turpin plantation, during a violent storm, several wily and powerful slaves laid plans for a general uprising. Their intentions were communicated, apparently by drum signals, to neighboring plantations. Six days later the attack began, the blacks in that section of the North indiscriminately slaughtering every white man, woman, and child on whom they could lay their hands. From this centre the massacre spread, accompanied by general arson, until practically every plantation in the fertile northern plain was a shambles. The whites who had escaped destruction cowered in the capital city.

The insurrection of 1791 returned measure for measure to the planters for their previous cruelties. Whether one reads accounts written by Haitian patriots or by white apologists, the story is the same: the ferocities on both sides were almost incredible. Blacks gutted children and raped women, whites broke captured Negroes on the wheel, poured boiling oil in their ears, and flayed them alive. The Reign of Terror in France was decorous by comparison. The pent-up hatred of decades was working itself out.

Against half a million riotous blacks the handful of whites had no chance. All who could leave the country fled precipitately. The gens de couleur, on the contrary, although at first alarmed, soon discovered that the revolting slaves were inclined to be friendly to them. They accordingly tried to turn the insurrection to their own purpose, to seize the rule of the colony now being depopulated of whites. France, herself in turmoil, sent over various commissioners whose thankless duty it was to try to restore order; but they were incompetent, often worked at odds with each other, and sometimes engaged in actual treachery. Matters were, if anything, complicated by their ministrations. 175 669 [648]

In addition, Spain and England, always ready to harass the French, sent troops into Saint-Domingue on the pretext of trying to put down the slave insurrection lest it spread to their neighboring colonies of Santo Domingo and Jamaica. The French general in the colony, Laveaux, would shortly have been defeated if help had not come from two natives, one a well-to-do mulatto, the other a black [648]

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ex-slave, each of whom aroused his own group to fight off the invading Spaniards and English.

These two men emerging from the maelstrom were the cultured colored general, Rigaud, and the powerful Negro, Toussaint. United in purpose in 1793, they soon began to oppose each other. Their dissent foreshadowed the rift which was permanently to divide free Haiti.

Rigaud, born at Les Cayes in 1761,[14] had been brought up in Bordeaux, France, where he was taught the trade of a goldsmith. Like many other colored colonial youths, he went briefly to Georgia to fight on the side of the Americans in their revolution against England. Gifted with extraordinary military talent, he rose to prominence in Saint-Domingue following the slave insurrection, and played a major part in expelling the British from the colony. He was fiery, intellectual, and brilliant, but lacking in self-control and political subtlety, which put him at a disadvantage with Toussaint. Rigaud's admirers—almost the whole body of free colored people—included all the influential persons in the colony once the whites had been cowed or driven out; the South was devoted to him body and soul, and he had numerous partisans in the provinces of the North and West. But Toussaint was the idol of the half-million blacks.

Born a slave, Toussaint was fortunate in having a kindly master who permitted him the sort of work which gave him leisure for reading. He studied eagerly, devouring all accounts he could find of the military exploits of Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar. Apparently he took no part in the slave uprising; on the contrary, he helped his master escape to the United States and later regularly provided him with money. Then he himself went to the Spanish part of the island, where he made a military reputation in the Spanish colonial army. When General Laveaux sought his aid against the invaders of harassed Saint-Domingue, the ex-slave accepted his overtures. Detractors of Toussaint call him a "cunning hypocrite" for joining and then deserting the Spaniards, and for accepting high rank under a French general whom he was even then (so it is asserted) planning to supersede. His decision to return to Saint-Domingue was certainly crucial, for it began his meteoric ascent to power.

Accompanied by the black troops he had captained in the Spanish

14. Les Cayes, the third largest town in modern Haiti, was even in colonial times an important seaport. It is located on the southwestern peninsula.

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colony, he fought engagements with several Spanish detachments on the way back to Saint-Domingue, and soon achieved the return to France of all the territory Spain had recently won from her. Seeing that his ineffectively trained black troops were as yet no match for the disciplined British, he temporarily withdrew from public sight in order to build his army into a coördinated, smoothly functioning machine. Then he not only defeated the British, but forced their complete withdrawal from the island. He freed General Laveaux, whom they had imprisoned in Cap Français, thereby putting his own commanding officer under personal obligation to him. By 1796 Toussaint was the undisputed hero of his soldiers and, through their praise, of the mass of black ex-slaves; moreover, the French commander trusted and respected him; even the whites of the former régime looked to him with hope, for they had grudgingly to concede that, black though he was, he alone had the power to restore peace and order in the colony.

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Only the colored group looked askance at him. They had welcomed the insurrection of the slaves in 1791 as an invaluable, if bloody, aid in their struggle for equality with the whites; but they were not inclined to be ruled by an ex-slave whose eminence was already a threat to the social order they wished to establish. When, in 1793, the French commissioners had abolished slavery in Saint-Domingue,[15] the action had been as distasteful to the free colored people as it was to the whites; both groups wanted to continue to own slaves; the gens de couleur merely wanted their share also in governing the colony. In their opinion, the struggle was getting out of hand. They gave their allegiance, consequently, not to Toussaint, but to their own man, Rigaud.

The black general now began to show himself as astute a politician as he had been a skilful soldier. He had a romantic streak, which made him assume the prophetic surname Louverture;[16] but beneath the romanticism was a peculiar diplomatic realism. When a newly arrived governor-general tried to stir up dissension between blacks and colored people, on the principle of divide and rule, Toussaint

15. In order to pacify the blacks and to win their support against the invading armies of Spain and England.

16. The name Louverture, now generally written L'Ouverture, is ordinarily conceded to imply Toussaint's conviction that he would provide the opening through which his fellow blacks might achieve freedom. According to another account the name was given him because of his ability to make a breach in the ranks of the enemy; still another explanation refers to his missing front teeth.

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deftly had him promoted out of colonial office. When another group of commissioners came, he agreed in conference with them that the remaining whites should be expelled for the sake of peace; as soon as this was done, however, he effected the nomination of both the chief commissioner and General Laveaux as representatives of the colony in the French Assembly, sitting in Paris. Under guise of bestowing honors, he had got rid of every white person who had the slightest claim to rule. By 1797 Toussaint was the supreme leader in Saint-Domingue, his authority disputed only by Rigaud and the colored group. A civil war was needed to settle the issue between them, and since his forces were much more numerous than Rigaud's, Toussaint emerged victor in the brief conflict. Rigaud fled to France, the power of the mulattoes was broken, and no one was left openly to contest Toussaint's rule.

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"The First of the Blacks," as Toussaint was called, is a bewildering anomaly, and full of contradictions. He had been a slave for fifty years before the insurrection, and was to live only eleven after it. In that short period he became one of the most talked-of men in the world. His Spanish superior officer had said that "God in this terrestrial globe could not commune with a purer spirit"; the Frenchman, Lacroix, remarked, "No one approaches him without fear, and no one leaves him without respect." Even his enemies paid him homage: an English officer, as "a man, a governor, and a general"; a white Frenchman, as "a philosopher, a general, and a good citizen." When he died Wordsworth wrote a moving sonnet to him who had strengthened human faith in "man's unconquerable mind." Yet Toussaint had been a deserter and a schemer, and ruthlessly exploited his power to achieve absolute authority. His own deep conviction of his special mission to lead his people from misery to security has always for his apologists excused the more dubious aspects of his character.

To many Toussaint was a hero with elements of saintliness. In the overheated atmosphere of prejudice and hatred in Saint-Domingue he pursued a calm policy of moderation. Under him, anarchy and massacres came to an end. With an army at his beck and call, he used force only to maintain freedom for his fellow blacks and to defend the colony against foreign invasion. As nominal governor-general after 1799 he revived prosperity, inculcated discipline as an antidote to the intoxication of liberty, respected his contracts, and was a friend of law and order. On the other hand, he had moments

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of inordinate vanity, and would brook no interference. His henchmen had to endure merciless tongue-lashings. His own people's freedom, about which he was publicly so solicitous, was in many respects little better than slavery.

What he did is more easily told than what he was. Emerging, after a long reign of terror, as a leader in a land which had once been a paradise for whites, he checked among his people the passion and fear which had led to violence. With the restoration of peace, labor began once more on the plantations. The Negroes, though no longer slaves, were ordered back to work, and they docilely obeyed. The return of prosperity between 1799 and 1802 was amazing.

But the brilliance of Toussaint's rule was first dimmed and then completely extinguished by the rising star of Napoleon in France.[17] Haitian history between 1802 and 1804, although apparently incidental to the story of the contest between blacks and colored people which here concerns us, is nevertheless significant for an understanding of what was to transpire in Haitian social affairs. Napoleon was irritated beyond measure at the effrontery of Toussaint's seizure of power in the colony. The black leader had shown canny statesmanship in winning the friendly coöperation of the president of the United States, John Adams. The supplies and ships that Adams sent enabled Toussaint not only to defeat Rigaud but to achieve independence from France in all but name. With American assistance, Toussaint negotiated an advantageous treaty with England. Probably even more annoying to the First Consul than these political triumphs was Toussaint's audacious success in aping and even anticipating the spacious actions by which Napoleon was trying to make himself majestic in the world's eyes.[18]

It is possible that Napoleon might not have paid so much attention

17. It seems strange that this black, a veritable genius whatever his faults, should be so mildly honored in modern Haiti. True, he is regarded with respect, and there are a few statues of him; but the homage of the people is paid rather to his successor, General Dessalines, the antithesis of Toussaint in everything but courage. It was Dessalines, of course, who struck the final blow for Haitian freedom, but even this triumph seems to the foreigner small in comparison with the very real achievements of Toussaint.

18. For example: Napoleon had given a new constitution to France after his *coup d'état* of the 18 Brumaire; similarly Toussaint, having effected his own coup in Saint-Domingue by deposing the French civil agent, citizen Roume, immediately thereafter gave *his* people a new constitution. In it he not only assumed all political power for life, but also ascribed to himself the right of naming his successor. Bonaparte was unable to take so daring a step for another year. There is ample evidence to show that meanwhile he chafed under the idea of being imitated and anticipated by a "gilded African," as he called Toussaint.

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to Toussaint if Saint-Domingue had been merely a colony like Martinique, and not the single centre from which measures for rebuilding the French colonial system could radiate. France was once more taking over Louisiana from Spain; but before Bonaparte could effectively reach Louisiana to establish his New World empire, he must make sure of Saint-Domingue. The very real power of Toussaint had to be crushed, and through the whole of 1801 Napoleon was making preparations for the annihilation of the black governor."[19]

The plans were as follows: to send his brother-in-law, Leclerc, with a formidable French army to "succeed" Toussaint as governor; to try to persuade the blacks that the new régime was entirely benevolent to their race, so that no armed resistance would be offered; if persuasion and diplomacy failed, to fight and conquer the Negroes, subduing them once more to slavery; and, above all, to capture Toussaint with all his black counselors and send them as prisoners to France. Napoleon undertook to prepare the way for Leclerc by writing personally to Toussaint: "Assist the Captain-General [Leclerc] with your counsels, your influence, and your talents. What can you desire?—the liberty of the blacks? You know that in all the countries where we have been, we have given it to the people who had it not." He repeated this assurance in his message a week later to the French legislature (November 22, 1801): "At Saint-Domingue and at Guadeloupe there are no more slaves. All are free there; all will remain free." Still further, the proclamation he drew up for Leclerc to publish upon his arrival, as a reassurance to the blacks, ran: "If you are told that these forces are destined to ravish your liberty, answer: The Republic has given us liberty, the Republic will not suffer it to be taken from us!"

Leclerc with his army arrived at Cap Français late in January, 1802. He hoped to be received at the capital as a friend, but Christophe, the black general in charge of the city, repulsed his advances. Leclerc was obliged to attack; on February 5 Christophe set fire to the city and withdrew to the neighboring hills. The war of independence had begun.

19. The part played by Toussaint for a brief moment in the history of the United States is full of significance. Certain historians are of the opinion that if Napoleon had been successful in the reconquest of Saint-Domingue he would have turned his attention to America rather than to Europe, for he had great colonial schemes. His failure in the colony, according to this theory, made him try to withdraw gracefully from the New World by selling Louisiana to the United States.

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their new status was definitely higher. Mild serfdom might be thought of as the first intermediate step toward freedom. Democracy was still far off, there being no real middle class upon which to build it. Only the artisans of the towns and the ex-soldiers or the cultivators who had managed to lease small estates could be considered middle class. Christophe forced every dweller in villages or towns to have a manual skill. The only alternative was field work on a plantation.

The "aristocrats" of the kingdom were prevailingly black rather than colored. It was not to be expected that a vain man would soon forget the trick by which the mulattoes had frustrated him in his expectation of becoming the ruler of all Haiti. To say that the intermittent civil war between Christophe's kingdom of the North and Pétion's republic of the South was a struggle between blacks and colored people would not do great violence to the essential truth. Christophe's suspicion of gens de couleur was so well known that few were surprised at the high death rate of mulatto generals in the North. The murder of General Clervaux was definitely laid at Christophe's door.

The fact remains that among the nobility were men of all degrees of color. The King liked to say that he neither accepted nor yet took exception to the color of a man's epidermis—that in this matter he was *vert* (green), which is to say, neutral and indifferent. When he was angry his wrath fell indiscriminately upon the offender of whatever complexion. Similarly, when he found a light-skinned man who faithfully supervised a leased estate, thus proving his loyalty, the man was rewarded and promoted. Nevertheless, an underlying prejudice remained in his breast, bursting out occasionally at crises, and having ultimately a serious effect upon the loyalty of many of his people. When some of his subjects, enticed by the easy-going régime of the South, ran away to Pétion's republic, Christophe was angry enough to renew the war against Pétion (1811). The South won the encounter, thereby adding fuel to Christophe's rage. Three hundred prisoners he had captured he ordered tortured, and the angry King abused and insulted his own officers and executed several soldiers for having lost the battle. These actions caused more defections, renewed punishments, and a more abiding rancor. As one writer put it, the King "now regarded the mulattoes with a hatred so deep and fiendlike, that nothing would satisfy the direness of his

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175 an ineffective government, momentarily in the hands of colored
563 élite. Attempting to dominate politics was a numerically small group
565 of colored people and a still smaller group of Negroes. Although
[701] prevailingly black, the army might be, and in the later nineteenth
[669] century was continually, used by whichever group offered more.
A third power, a middle class, might have balanced these antagonistic factions. Lacking such a moderating influence, Haiti was the victim of recurrent revolutionary movements.

175 At the time of Boyer, actual democracy would have been no safe-
178 guard, for it would have meant the supremacy of ignorance. His
642 rule was the beginning of unfortunate days for Haiti. After the
643 auspicious opening years, the President became an impotent onlooker as his country declined. It is instructive to compare the Haiti of Dessalines and Christophe with the Haiti of 1843, only one generation later.[62]

175 The Haiti of 1806 had been a beehive of activity. Soldiers, fore-
178 men, and policemen then stood over the workers with lianes to
642 force them to labor for the benefit of their state. Production was
433 carefully planned, an ordered hierarchy making every person in the
466 country responsible to another higher than himself until the ruler was reached at the pinnacle. The cardinal fault of any laborer was to shirk at his task. The year 1843, on the contrary, found Haiti in a condition of quiescence which, to those who remembered the old days, resembled torpor. The central government had ceased to drive its citizens, and its half-hearted attempts at persuasion were futile. Overseers, drivers of gangs of workers, soldiers whose duty it was to enforce labor, had disappeared from the scene. Every man was his own master.

175 The standard of living in 1806 as in 1843 was low; but in the earlier
178 year there had been a promise of great things to come once Haiti
511 had rebuilt what war had destroyed. The succeeding years, however, failed to inculcate into the people a desire for any higher standard of life. Country dwellers were benighted; ignorance deepened the habit

[162] 62. Haiti has never had an accurate census, so that it is impossible even to estimate
[175] the total population of the country either in 1806 or in 1843. The figures of 380,000 and 800,000 given by some authors for the two years are mere guesses. Likewise, one can only deduce the proportion of people in the main economic and social categories; probably seventy-five per cent of the Haitians were serfs in 1806 and the same percentage peasants in 1843; the "aristocracy," including all who did not derive a living by manual labor or army service, could hardly have reached five per cent in either year; the army, house servants, day laborers in the towns, and petty businessmen would make up the other twenty per cent.

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IV

CASTE LINES BECOME PERMANENT

175 178 THE contrast between the golden days of forced labor and the stagnating mediocrity of Boyer's Haiti was as vivid to thinking Haitian aristocrats as it was to foreign whites. Particularly the young "intellectuals" of the 'thirties who knew something of the progress taking place in the rest of the Western World felt that the time had come to stem the wave of economic disintegration at home. In a series of pronouncements they pointed out that the advancement of Haiti had "been constantly slowed up for some time. . . . Haiti is stationary, is retrograde: we need no other proof of it than this frightful uncertainty about the future which so deeply disturbs all serious minds and sincere patriots." One may discount the phrase 175 668 about "sincere patriots," for peasants were patriots even though undisturbed by the economic stagnation. The agitation for reform won a wide following among all the élite who cherished a glowing recollection of earlier days.

Leaders of the young men called upon Boyer in 1838 to introduce stronger methods of forced labor; but Boyer, remembering the fate of his Code Rural in which he had tried to do precisely this, could think of no effective way of tinkering again with the economic system. From the young men he received the most contradictory advice as to specific methods. The result of the appeal was therefore merely continued inaction by the government. The agitators, ex- 175 cellent critics if poor reformers, accordingly persisted in their cam- 668 paign, adding new converts to their cause until the movement pro- ● 669 duced a crisis. Revolution broke out in January 1843 at Torbeck in the South, and rapidly spread toward the capital; within two months 643 Boyer and his faithful secretary-general, Inginac, had departed for exile.[1]

[643] [159] 1. Boyer went first to Jamaica, and then to Paris. In the latter capital King Louis-Philippe gave him an audience and called him "prince." Boyer replied, "Sire, I am no prince. I have merely been the head of a small republic." The King of France thereupon affectionately pressed Boyer's hand, remarking, "When one has governed a million people for twenty-five years, he is raised to the rank of princes." . . . Boyer died in Paris in 1850.

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Political history of the next seventy-two years is a complicated story, of which only enough need be told here to illuminate the evolution of caste and social distinctions. Even a short summary reveals the bewildering confusion. Of the twenty-two heads of state between 1843 and 1915 only one served out his prescribed term of office;[2] three died while serving, one was blown up with his palace, one presumably poisoned, and one hacked to pieces by a mob; one resigned. The other fourteen were deposed by revolution after incumbencies ranging in length from three months to twelve years.

The Revolution of 1843 brought back into national prominence the whole matter of color and caste. The young revolutionaries, mostly light-skinned, seem to have assumed that their group was permanently in control. With cavalier highhandedness they set about capturing the last stronghold of Negro eminence: the army. They soon found, however, that they had caught a Tartar; their attempt to rule was fatal to them and their clique.

In the Constitutional Assembly convened to make a new constitution for the country, they professed astonishingly democratic doctrines. Proclaiming that the fault of former governments had been reliance upon military power, they now proposed to make civil power paramount by allowing the common people to vote. Since up to this time the franchise had been strictly limited to army officers and anciens libres, such a radical departure as general suffrage makes no sense unless conceived as an attempt to break the power of the Negro-controlled army, for surely the élite had no confidence in the wisdom of the peasantry. Weight is given to this explanation by the paradoxical action of the revolutionaries in promoting to high army rank some of the strongest mulatto partisans of civil government.

The new constitution was an immediate failure. Most of the colored élite condemned the giving of voting rights to peasants and workers; the army chiefs, generally black and illiterate, some of them aging veterans of 1803, bitterly resented being made subservient to young, inexperienced civil officers; in fact, even the new mulatto president, Rivière-Hérard, had no conception of government other than by military dictatorship.

Not only was the constitution a failure; so was the government of the young revolutionaries. A part of their weakness lay in their

2. The presidential term varied under different constitutions; some allowed a four-year term with the right of reflection, some six years with no reflection.

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175 choice of a leader. Not gifted with administrative ability, Hérard
643 blundered first by imprisoning one of the most popular Negro leaders in the country, thereby turning much of the population of the South against him. Next, learning of conspiracies in the Spanish
• [669] end of the island, he tried to stamp out revolt by exile and jail sentences, only to precipitate there a real revolution for independence. In his fight against the Dominican separatists he was roundly defeated, and his prestige sank rapidly to the vanishing point. Within two months after his inauguration, he had only one third of the island left over which to attempt to rule. Within a year he was out of power altogether and with him the colored people.

175 The Revolution of 1844, although supported by certain old friends
669 of Boyer, was chiefly a movement of Negroes—followers of the imprisoned black, Salomon; peasants from the South who had been promised much by the previous year's revolutionaries and had got nothing; and particularly the Negro army clique. The significant part of the new revolution was its announced purpose, to lessen the influence of the colored group in government, to have a black president, and to dispossess certain reputedly well-to-do citizens by
[643] dividing their estates among the people. Quickly successful, the insurgents promoted to the presidency the illiterate octogenarian black general, Guerrier, who in Christophe's kingdom had been Duke of Marmalade[3] and Duke of Avancé.

175 For the first time in a quarter-century the Negro element was
643 again in the saddle, where it was to remain for the next fifteen years.
662 Everyone recognized Guerrier's personal courage and admired the common sense which made him prefer conciliation to unnecessary violence as a method of government, but the colored people were shocked at having to live under the rule of another black ex-slave. The idea evoked grim memories. Knowing Guerrier's addiction to drink, the colored faction managed to make him a tool for their own use, so that his brief administration, ending with his death in 1845, was generally known as a "government of understudies." Guerrier was followed in the presidency by another black, likewise an octo-
175 genarian: Louis Pierrot, the handsome brother-in-law of King
643 Christophe. But Pierrot was even more ignorant than Guerrier and

[554] 3. This title generally evokes amusement among non-Haitians. Christophe had merely named his peers after districts whose names had been given by French planters in the eighteenth century. Another of his noblemen was a Count of Limonade.

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175 643 [625] Suddenly, without warning, he reversed what had been mistaken for docile inactivity, and assumed complete personal command of the reins of office. By means of a well-organized body of secret police, he inspired his own counselors with fear not only for their positions but for their lives. Although illiterate, Soulouque never signed a bill presented to him by his ministers until he was sure he knew its essential core. The hopeful "understudies" were forcibly awakened to the realization that they were hoist on their own petard.

175 643 563 ●669 The colored element was particularly apprehensive at Soulouque's amazing activity, for the President was clearly setting himself against their group, both in the cabinet and out. Determining clandestinely to get rid of their puppet before he became a Frankenstein's monster to destroy his creators, they fomented a new revolution. This, however, proved to be a strategic error of the first magnitude, for the President was already much stronger than they imagined. The insurrection was quashed with massacre and attendant frightfulness. In the aftermath, as Bouzon mordantly remarks, "the republic was calm—with all the tranquillity of a tomb!" By their ineptitude, the colored group had now made themselves completely insecure.

175 565 643 642 [555] In the second year of his régime Soulouque decided to imitate Dessalines by turning the state into an empire. His coronation was extremely gaudy, as well as expensive. Calling himself Emperor Faustin I, he created a peerage drawn chiefly from among his black generals—four princes, fifty-nine dukes, and numerous counts, barons, and knights. This was merely outward pomp to gratify their craving for prestige, for they had no functions to perform, nor even the necessity of Christophe's peers to pay for their regalia. As nobles they were given no responsibilities in directing economic activity nor any increased political power over districts of the empire. The Emperor's own vanity was flattered by having a peerage. He ruled as an autocrat with blatant despotism. For ten years following the coronation Haiti had to accustom itself to costly expeditions against the Dominican Republic, nearly all ending in defeat for Haiti. The outcome of these intermittent wars was neither gain nor loss of territory by either side, but only temporary rule of occupied districts. Haiti likewise had to accustom itself to sudden executions, to the shabby grandeur of court display, and to financial trickery which would not have deceived a schoolboy. While the heads of his opponents and even his loyal counselors fell, Soulouque's infantile

175 643 721 648 728

"empire" tottered to economic ruin.

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"empire" tottered to economic ruin. Graft, default on the debt, increasing deficits, and debased currency were the order of the day, and so continued until 1859, when the accumulation of anger over the useless wars and the humiliating defeats made the Emperor so unpopular that a new and more carefully planned revolution accomplished his downfall. 175 643 652 669

Fifteen years of administration by Negro rulers had broken the political power of the colored élite. Only three light-skinned men became president thereafter until the occupation of Haiti by the American Marines in 1915; in the seventy-two years following Boyer's downfall, mulattoes ruled during only eight. The army under a black general was too powerful, a colored president too hampered by suspicion, to make the political game worth the candle. The colored élite, therefore, adapted themselves to existing conditions as best they could, controlling the business life of Haiti, filling the law offices and, because of their literacy, the secretaryships of state, and indulging in honorific cultural pursuits. 175 643 178 564

In the years after Soulouque the basic realities of Haitian life were changed hardly at all by shifting political administrations. Some of the presidents were mildly progressive, many were indifferent; still more were actually harmful; but the lives of the mass of peasants were not often touched by presidential vagaries. Politics was an affair almost wholly of townspeople, of the army, the élite, and the pseudo-élite. Revolutions, counterrevolutions, movements of reform, international tangles, financial woes, and most of the other complications to which unstable states are heir, absorbed the attention of rulers and upper-class folk who were politically inclined. 175 643 66

Constitutions were made by presidents and changed by their successors; the Senate passed contradictory laws in the same session if the chief executive so recommended; the courts were presided over by the president's men. Haitian law in the latter half of the nineteenth century was what the president's immediate strength and wish made it—or else it was folk custom, undisturbed by the rulers. 175 642 671 692

Never once, in the three quarters of a century after Boyer's time, did Haiti approach the high standard of production known in colonial days or in the early years of independence. The pattern of Haitian social and economic life became fixed in this seventy-five years. Haiti became a country of small-scale tillage by a peasant population, with only enough external trade to provide moderate 175 178 433 565 439

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Since it was an entrenched interest, however, no responsible statesman had dared to threaten its hold. The Marines swept it out of existence, undertaking to substitute for it a trained constabulary of only 2,000 men who should combine routine military tasks with police duty in the scattered towns. Results were immediately apparent: the weighty incubus of soldiers' wages was lifted from the treasury; thousands of men were deprived of sinecures and put back into productive economic activities; the constant threat of armed revolution was removed; better order was kept by 2,000 trained men in trim uniform than by twelve times that number of ragged loafers who called themselves soldiers; and since the army was no longer the great steppingstone to political office, the élite felt more secure from assault by ambitious but uneducated army men. From 1843 to 1915 the élite had endured many lower-caste presidents because these were able to control the army; now the army had disappeared.

The Marines did much that was of indisputable benefit to Haiti. This was acknowledged even by the most vocal patriots who soon began to campaign for an end of the Occupation. Where there had been no real work in public health, Americans now built hospitals, established clinics, cleaned up the sources of many diseases, laid down sewage systems, gave the towns pure water. In 1915 there were only three automobiles in the country, and no roads for them to travel; the Americans built many miles of paved roads. In 1915 there had been only one wharf, two short stretches of railroad, two lighthouses, one electric plant; the Americans undertook electrification, telephone systems, the construction of administration buildings, and other public conveniences. Whether in such visible matters or in the obscurer realms of currency, banking, and budgets hardly a phase of daily life was left untouched. And judged by the standards of civilization the Marines improved what they touched.

But rancor against the Americans began early and continued to the bitter end in 1934. The pride of all Haitians was deeply wounded by the Occupation. For 111 years they had governed themselves and had assumed themselves to be a sovereign nation; the Marines patroling the countryside were vivid reminders that Haiti had never been independent except by sufferance, and that white men were once more overseeing the destinies of colored and Negro men. Nevertheless, the reasons proclaimed for opposing the Occupation were not those of hurt vanity. Some of those given were entirely

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reported in Haiti that although they joined patriotically in the cheering when the Marines embarked in 1934, many of them shed tears to see the departure of 2,000 monthly salaries, most of which had been enriching the local tills. Indeed, the country came much closer to establishing a mercantile middle class during the Occupation than ever before. The only real control left behind by the Americans was an overseer of the national budget, destined to leave as soon as Haiti's external debt was finally paid off. To that end the government saved rather than spent, so that businessmen found no comfort in the state of economic affairs, particularly during a decade of world depression and European disturbance. Nationalist economic theories in Europe have upset Haitian markets, so that the élite thriftily save their pennies against hard times instead of spending them freely on present luxuries. The American overseer of the budget withdrew in 1941.

At many points the forces of the Occupation touched unwittingly upon deep-rooted prejudices of the Haitian people. In order to secure laborers for road construction the Marines revived an old corvée law of Christophe's time, requiring forced labor on public works at the need of the government. Many of the ill-nourished peasants were taxed beyond their physical powers by work on the roads, so that an armed revolt by caco guerrillas broke out. Its suppression required months of time and cost many lives, leaving in its train a great deal of ill will.

The efficient Americans also came to grief when they attempted to make Haitians orderly in the American way. Land titles were in chaos, as we have noted. American experts wished to find a basis for internal taxation, so that economic reform might be effective and permanent. The effort to have people declare their claims so that these might be properly registered had to be given up after a few weeks, for the peasant owners knew without written deeds their local boundaries, and among the squatters those who realized their title might not stand under strict investigation were understandably averse to having questions of property tenure raised by the authorities of an alien and interfering government.

Wherever Marine barracks were located, there were centres of a cultural dissemination which was bound in the long run to affect Haitian ideas and practices. Automobiles, radios, amusements, even the daily conversation of the Marines, all left their mark upon a people who had been effectively isolated from the world for more than a century.

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learn the properties of plants, both for healing and for poison. Except for the belief in spiritual beings, this folk knowledge would hardly have been classed as religious, for it was useful in every phase of daily life; the classification is that of the anthropologist, not of the simple black.

If Dahomean beliefs prevailed over others of African origin, it was chiefly because of the numerical preponderance of Dahomeans in the colony, together with the popularity of their religious dances. The Dahomean spirits or gods were Vodun; the dance in which the worshiper sought the inspiration of the spirits was a Vodun dance. Like all but the highly organized religions, this one recognized the validity of other beliefs. Its practitioners were not bigots. No hierarchy existed to keep out new accretions. Imperceptibly these were added to the original basic form: here an Arada spirit, there a Congolese prayer, and in many instances a Catholic saint, until the composite Vodun religion began to take shape.

There is no evidence that during colonial times Vodun was ever considered important by the white ruling class—certainly not as a faith. To most planters the word was the name for a vigorous dance. Judging from Moreau de Saint-Méry's description it was held openly enough, at times being witnessed by the whites as a sort of nocturnal diversion. Moreau knew, as did other whites, that there were "superstitious beliefs" connected with it, yet the offhand use of the word "superstition" was indication enough that the beliefs were not regarded as important. We have seen, however, what profitable use the slaves were able to make of the apparent innocence of their dances. When the idea of revolt began to germinate among them, gathering on each plantation at least once a week they had ample opportunity to hatch their plans. It is known that the campaign for revolt was developed partly under the stimulus of the Negro Boukman, a *houngan* or priest of Vodun. By means of drumbeats, which to the whites merely pounded out the rhythm for dancing but had for centuries been a means of communication at long distance in parts of West Africa, that ripening plot was telegraphed from one plantation to another. Even more important, perhaps, was the unity of feeling made possible, despite all incoherence of tradition and language, by the Vodun background.

The revolt of half a million slaves was a success. This fact has been rather too calmly accepted by historians of Saint-Domingue, who

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have explained it chiefly by the surprise element of the uprising. But when else in modern history have slaves successfully revolted against their armed masters and become permanently free? Successful revolutions even of people not in bodily slavery have had acknowledged leadership, whereas in Haiti no real leader appeared for the insurgents. Boukman's influence, indeed, at its widest never reached beyond a part of the northern plain; he had about the same range of power as a ward boss in the United States. On the plantations Hallaou, Hyacinthe, Lafortune, and others whose names are unimportant or unknown, Vodun houngans likewise welded slave opinion within their narrow districts. But no single great leader appeared. As the conflict was developed, without plan or unity under the divided and contradictory action of numerous blacks, what held the people together was, negatively, their hatred of the white masters; positively, their Vodun beliefs. Only later in the decade did a true leader, Toussaint L'Ouverture, emerge to consolidate their victory.

As often happens among unsophisticated people convinced of the rightness of their cause, the local Vodun leaders were sure of their own invulnerability through the protection of one or another of the spirits.[8] They convinced their followers as well, to such a degree that when an invulnerable chief fell there were dozens of reasons to explain the unexpected death rather than any disillusion. Usually, failure to follow the rigorous propitiation requirements of the protecting god offered the key to the misfortune. Various ones of them were known to be exacting and troublesome. The leader at Trou-Coffi, Romaine by name, had absorbed enough of the Roman Catholicism in Vodun to feel that the Virgin Mary was his especial patroness.[9] Beyond this specific belief in invulnerability was the general trust that Vodun spirits would lead their devotees to success, would give them a happy issue out of all their distress.

8. A parallel case of belief in invulnerability because of divine protection was that of the North American Indians both at the time of Tecumseh and later in the Sioux outbreaks at the climax of the Ghost-Dance Religion. See James Mooney, *The Ghost-Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890* (Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1892–93 [Washington, 1896]), chap. X.

9. The importance of Vodun beliefs in connection with the slave revolt is stressed by Dr. J.-C. Dorsainvil, *Vodou et Névrose* (Port-au-Prince, 1931), pp. 33–34. He says of many of the chiefs: "The belief in their invulnerability was not at all the result of calculation, but was a true state of mind, a sort of autosuggestion which explains very well the chronic heroism of certain leaders of the revolution in Saint-Domingue and of the war of independence of 1802–3."

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Vodun, then, was both widespread and powerful enough to be turned to most effective ends in 1791. Contemporary accounts of it still saw it as a meeting ground of superstitions. The French naturalist, Descourtilz, for example, was primarily struck by the use of the occult in connection with Vodun; he especially describes a woman who, under the seizure of her god, took a live coal in her hand without being burnt; a husband who by the use of magic struck his inconstant wife with a languorous malady, effective for half a year; and the knowledge of poison which was combined with the practice of magic. He mentions but one of the Vodun gods by name but implies the existence of many others.[10]

Madiou, Haiti's first historian, likewise always spoke of Vodun as a savage survival; he says of a native general, "Lamour Dérance, plunged in gross errors, put his faith in *sorcery*, in the prophecy of *papas*, or priests of *African fetishism*."[11] In his scornful distaste for the vulgar he clearly indicated by his own italics some conspicuous elements of the developing religion: magic, the use of fetishes, and a Vodun priesthood. His illustration of Dérance's error was his making soldiers believe that bullets could not wound them:

> When he marched to combat he was preceded by bands of Congos, Aradas, Ibos, Nabos, Mandingues, Haoussas, who threw themselves against the French battalions with a prodigious intrepidity, crying that the bullets were but dust. But this courage which *superstition* fed was shattered against the ramparts of . . . the Europeans' square formations.

It is noteworthy that the first three black rulers set themselves against Vodun because of its potentialities for sedition. The plots to overthrow the old régime had come to fruition at apparently innocent Vodun dances. Although the ingenuous aspect of the dance gathering had deceived the white masters, Toussaint, Dessalines, and Christophe knew the meaning of the assemblies. All three had to drive their people hard and knew that resentment would be an inevitable consequence; it must not have an opportunity to burgeon at nightly gatherings. Toussaint was the strictest of the three, for he forbade all dances and nocturnal assemblage.[12] The other two singled

10. M. E. Descourtilz, *Voyages d'un naturaliste en Haïti, 1799–1803* (Paris, 1935 ed.), pp. 116–118.
11. Thomas Madiou, *Histoire d'Haïti*, III, p. 33.
12. In an order of January 4, 1800.

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Boyer was overthrown by the Revolution of 1843, by all odds the

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most important of Haitian upheavals. Since its effects were to be felt for the next seventy years in the extinction of representative government and the eclipse of the élite as political rulers, it is worthy of special attention. Paradoxically, it was a revolution fomented by the élite themselves. Its background and outcome reveal the power in word, and the impotence in deed, of this group by 1843.

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The constitution of 1816, devised by Pétion's henchmen, had granted the president initiative in all laws except those concerning taxation. After the agreement of 1825 with France,[6] however, Boyer, hard pressed by the need of paying the indemnity each year, began to restrict the number of officials, diminish their salaries, and veto all projects favorable to the development of public instruction and improvement which might cause further expenditure. By temperament he was an autocrat.[7] Every valuable measure must come from him alone; whatever another person proposed he would find a thousand reasons to discard. Sarcastic and vain, he did not know how to smooth ruffled feelings or make conflicting groups reconcile their differences. His personal weaknesses of character alienated the sympathies of many once-devoted officials.

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During his long presidency Boyer also systematically ignored the younger generation, men who admired the efforts of Pétion, ardent reformers who wished to devote their energies to the improvement of Haiti. The military career had no attraction for them: the higher ranks, alone bringing sufficient salary for a congenial way of life, were too few and one could achieve them only with difficulty, for since 1825 advancement had been submitted to rigorous rules. On the other hand, the paths of administration were severely guarded by those admirable great functionaries left over from the government of Pétion—men like Inginac and Imbert. But age had slowed their activity, and still Boyer kept them on. The younger generation mocked this "gerontocracy" and supported the parliamentary opposition.

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The youth of the élite class continued to go to France for their education, returning to Haiti to take part in the lively political discussions which made one of their chief occupations. During the first decade of Boyer's administration they generally supported him, for

6. By which France recognized the independence of Haiti in return for the payment of a large annual indemnity.

7. "In everything, he wishes to dominate," Pétion had said of him.

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When the Chamber of 1842 assembled Boyer once more forced the elimination of these men and several of their political friends.[9] The majority in the Chamber was so agitated over this expulsion that only twenty-eight out of seventy-two deputies thereafter appeared at any session. A dozen communes, among them the most important in the country (Port-au-Prince, Les Cayes, Gonaïves, Santo Domingo), had no representation. The deputies of the South avenged themselves by instituting a series of "patriotic banquets." At the plantations of adversaries of the government dinners were given for dozens of guests; the meals were followed by vibrant speeches, full of criticisms of the government. Thanks to the talent of these orators, the opposition likewise gradually filtered its way into the mass of the people, slowly but implacably undermining Boyer's government.

The President also had bad luck to contend with. During his presidency many catastrophies saddened the country. The arsenal blew up in 1827, burning the state warehouses and causing a loss of 5,000,000 piastres. A cyclone in 1831 desolated the South. Fires in 1832 and 1843 practically wiped out Port-au-Prince. An earthquake in 1842 shook the whole island, destroyed Santiago and Port-de-Paix, and transformed Cap-Haïtien into a mass of ruins; the fire which broke out in consequence was accompanied by pillaging which went on for several days. The parliamentary opposition to Boyer made use of these natural calamities to sharpen displeasure at the government.

In August, 1842, a secret association, The Society of the Rights of Man and of Citizen, was formed at Les Cayes to exploit this discontent and prepare the fall of Boyer. It circulated clandestinely throughout the South the ringing Manifesto by Praslin, a résumé of the charges of the opposition which was soon covered with signatures. When adherents of the society were numerous enough, an executive committee was formed with the commandant Rivière Hérard as president. At the end of January, 1843, an uprising occurred on the Praslin plantation.[10] General Borgella, head of the department of the South, proved irresolute; the insurrection, fostered by this indecision, spread rapidly among the troops, even generals joining in. By Febru-

9. The most important of the excluded deputies were Dumai Lespinasse, Covin Aîné, Dominique, Benoît, Ponthieux, Dorsainville Dautruc.
10. At Torbeck, in the department of the South.

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ary, 1843, Boyer realized that it was futile to oppose the revolutionaries and departed for exile, going by way of Jamaica to Paris.

Now came the test of the revolutionary leaders.[11] The state was in their hands; their own representative, Rivière Hérard, was the new president. They proceeded to concoct a ridiculously naïve constitution which by granting a popular vote alienated large bodies of their mulatto support; to insult the black army leaders; and to allow the defeat of Haitian forces by Dominican revolutionaries, thus losing two thirds of the island's area. Every act weakened the party favoring representative government. Within a year Rivière was ousted and a black general was ruling Haiti with a rod of iron. The Revolution of 1843 from which so much was expected had by its very success ruined the parliamentarians, for with power in their hands they showed themselves utterly inept.

A succession of black generals now came to the presidency. When Faustin Soulouque became president in 1847, the fourth Negro within four years, and made himself emperor two years later, Haiti found herself once more back at the strong-man principle. The élite were out of office, relegated to inferiority in all phases of political life.

In the middle of the nineteenth century the groups upholding the conflicting principles in politics became organized political parties. Those favoring parliamentary rule called themselves Liberals; those believing in the sole rule of a strong dictator were called Nationalists. But by no stretch of the imagination could the Liberal party be considered democratic. The noble principles expressed in the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the American Declaration of Independence were uncongenial to Haiti. One of the prime tenets of the Liberals, indeed, was that men were not created equal; rather that certain men (the élite) were clearly the superiors of others. Liberty

11. The revolution was almost wholly an affair of the élite caste. The mulatto Boyer was deposed, and the mulatto Rivière Hérard took his place. If anyone thought of the peasants, it was only to use them to manipulate and manoeuvre the "outs" into office. Boyer's secretary-general, deposed along with the President, appealed to his countrymen against their accusation of treason against him, saying "My last wishes will be for the prosperity of Haiti and the regeneration of the African caste, to which I have consecrated myself wholeheartedly for forty years, without ever thinking of my own interests." (Joseph Balthasar Inginac, *Message à ses compatriotes, et principalement à ceux qui ont dirigé les affaires populaires de la république depuis la fin de janvier dernier* [Port-au-Prince, March 18, 1843], p. 6). Yet if these are more than hopeful words, they refer only to the distribution of the land which made peasants of the "African caste," and to Inginac's pamphlets on how to raise coffee and other products—which none of the peasants could read.

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Pétion and Boyer had

suavity enough to rule constitutionally with a Senate which, since class interests were being served by the executive, did not curb their virtual dictatorships. Later presidents had more difficulty. Geffrard, for example, elected as a Liberal after the fall of Soulouque's grim empire, had made parliamentary government a battle cry of his campaign. In office, however, he was continually at loggerheads with his Senate, until he exercised his presidential privilege of dissolving it; in the end a revolution overthrew the Liberal parliamentarian because he had become a dictator. So with his successor Salnave (1867–69), likewise a Liberal, who almost immediately upon inauguration found it impossible to work with such a group of talkers. So once more with Nissage-Saget (1870–74), who followed Salnave: a professed believer in legislative responsibility, he refused to yield to the legislature on any important matter. A black Nationalist succeeded for two years, ruling despotically. Then came the last of the Liberal presidents, Boisrond-Canal (1876–79). This man was apparently determined to allow his legislature its full constitutional rights. As a result Haiti had more talk in the capital, and less action, than in almost any régime up to that time; then, as Montague says, "convinced that the constitutional régime was a failure, Haiti's most scrupulous president resigned in disgust."[13]

The Liberal party virtually disappeared from the scene in 1883, after two abortive coups by their leader of the moment, Boyer Bazelais. The first occurred in 1879 when the retiring President, Boisrond-Canal, gave Haiti one of her very rare honest elections, resulting in the choice of the Nationalist candidate Salomon. Bazelais and his men forsook their professed principles, rising in arms to seize power. They were suppressed. Four years later when the moment again seemed auspicious Bazelais led another revolution, which the President so effectively crushed that the leader himself was killed. The leaderless Liberals were no longer effective competitors in presidential politics. From that time until the American Occupation, the élite were out of power. One president only during those thirty-five years was a mulatto: Tancrède Auguste, one of the weakest rulers in Haitian history. He died, presumably poisoned, after eight months of office.

The era from 1883 to 1915 was Haiti's worst, politically. Revo-

13. Ludwell L. Montague, *Haiti and the United States, 1714–1938* (Durham, 1940), p. 18.

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The era from 1883 to 1915 was Haiti's worst, politically. Revo-

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lution succeeded revolution; the country sank deep into graft and scandal; foreign powers made Haiti debase herself before them. Some of the élite, backed by foreign merchants resident in the country, went so far as to urge annexation by the United States rather than endure continued disorder in economics and degradation in social life. They felt matters had come to such a pass that only so radical a change could clean the Augean stables. This was the period of a succession of political pamphlets[14] written by élite thinkers to set forth the necessary steps of reform. Every president was a black autocrat, holding power by his control over the masses. If an occasional one was more than mediocre (Hyppolite, for example), his good qualities were sure to be more than offset by the ignorant boors (such as Nord Alexis) who followed him.

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True, even the most incompetent of the Negro presidents was obliged to employ a few élite, for literacy was necessary in the foreign office if nowhere else. The aristocrats were impotent, however, for Haitian problems had tremendously increased at the very period when they were losing control of government policy. Reforms were imperative, as every member of the élite knew; but no black president saw the need, or seeing it, had the vaguest idea how to proceed toward effecting them. Beyond the shameful disgrace of Haiti's position in the world of independent nations, the thoughtful could glimpse the anarchy which must inevitably result from continued ineffectiveness.

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Reforms were not forthcoming. Rather, anarchy came, bringing international complications in its wake. The American Marines occupied the country. An era was ended.

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It had been a strange journey in political ideas from the time of Pétion and Christophe to that of the Occupation. The early leaders seemed to envision triumphs for Haiti in a world of great powers, and to see themselves as men with a mission. After Boyer the vision dimmed. We have Soulouque, whose tinsel empire was mere stage setting for the act of a neighborhood bully; the tyrant Domingue; the senile Nord Alexis; the utterly incompetent fly-by-nights in the decade before the Occupation. Even Geffrard the reformer, prob-

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14. Among the most lucid of these were: Démesvar Delorme, *La Misère au sein des richesses* (1873); Edmond Paul, *Les Causes de nos malheurs* (1889); Léonidas Laventure, *Haïti: le danger de la patrie* (1893); Alcius Charmant, *Haïti, vivra-t-elle?* (1905); and Auguste Magloire, *L'Erreur révolutionnaire et notre état social* (1909).

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prosper." Yet every change of administration saw merely a new embroidery on the old theme of sterility.[17]

The further weakness of social or class consciousness has already been treated at length. It kept the whole nation divided from top to bottom, setting black against colored, North against South, countryside against town. It meant a perennial civil war, latent at times, but constantly breaking out in new insurrections.

Some day a diligent scholar may try to catalogue the revolutions which Haiti has undergone. Magloire discusses sixty-nine "important" ones between 1806 and 1879;[18] but the latter date was merely the threshold of renewed revolutionary activity. There seems to have been very little pattern in these uprisings, except that almost never were they a spontaneous revolt of the masses, as the Slave Insurrection of 1791 had been. The peasants were constantly being impressed into service with the army of a general who had presidential ambitions. From the middle years of the nineteenth century certain peasants found fighting a more profitable trade than any other, and began to hire themselves out as mercenaries. In the North these professional guerrilla warriors were known as *cacos*, in the South as *piquets*. Their methods were those of terror and rapine. They were a constant menace to the peace, and their suppression was one of the announced purposes of the American Occupation, for every revolutionary chief felt it necessary to hire their services.

Another recognized procedure of revolution was incendiarism. Haitian politics is almost wholly the affair of townsmen, and more narrowly of the men of the six important towns—Port-au-Prince, Cap-Haïtien, Jérémie, Les Cayes, Gonaïves, and Saint-Marc. Except for their principal buildings and villas, these towns are constructed of wood or other inflammable material. Leaders of insurrections therefore have habitually set fire to the poorer sections of the towns, and as frequently as not this threat has won over the populace, who preferred overthrowing the government to having their homes burned. Support of the insurrection becomes a form of fire insurance. Such a state of affairs is eloquent testimony to the cynical attitude of the political leaders toward the masses.

A revolution directed by a general of real ambition was likely to

17. Auguste Magloire, *Histoire d'Haïti d'après un plan nouveau* (Port-au-Prince, 1909), I, 230, 243, 250–251, develops this theme at length.
18. *Ibid.*, Vol. II.

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A revolution directed by a general of real ambition was likely to involve an appeal to foreign powers. Haiti being almost roadless, ships were important for moving troops and blockading seaports. Many a chieftain has purchased six or eight ships abroad, and with this "navy" won his fight. Financial intrigue was frequent. By borrowing money from France, Germany, or England, with the promise to reshape Haitian financial policy to the benefit of the creditor country, several revolutionaries have secured funds for arms and the necessary soldiers to effect a coup. Sooner or later also one might expect to see the Môle Saint Nicolas, which guards the Windward Passage pathway between Cuba and Haiti, come into the picture. Cession of the Mole has frequently been held out as bait for foreign support, but popular opposition to white ownership of any Haitian land has always stopped actual cession. When Haiti's debt to Germany was due, she borrowed from France to pay it, and then later borrowed from the United States to pay France. All such appeals to foreign powers have merely drawn attention to the defenseless position of the country; many a successful revolutionary chief has lived to regret his appeal for aid.[19]

The one time between 1804 and 1915 when political opinion was vocal and truly significant was in the latter years of Boyer's administration. Then it took pains to attack specific evils with steady persistence, even though the cures suggested were vague. Yet after the successful elimination of Boyer, politicians who had worked so brilliantly in the opposition showed themselves even more incapable. Political thought, at a low ebb for the next forty years, revived only when, after 1883, the Liberals were eliminated from politics. Their complete defeat seems to have given élite thinkers time for sober reflection upon the plight of their country. Before 1843 the critics had been in a position to make their words effective; after 1883 they wrote—soberly, brilliantly, persuasively—but their books and pamphlets were read only by a small group of fellow aristocrats who already thought as they did, or disagreed with them in print. Political homilies made no impression upon the minds of the peasants left uneducated by all the élite presidents of Haiti.

In the crucial days of the American Occupation, once again political debate rose to brilliant heights. The rude shock of seeing foreign

19. See, on this whole subject of Haiti's foreign relations, an excellent chapter in Montague, *op. cit.*, chap. IX.

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age for the president to dispense, and has preserved the semblance of republican government; but hardly half a dozen legislative sessions in all Haitian history have contributed seminal ideas in politics or initiated true reforms. How could they, indeed, when the president was consistently a dictator of policy?

4. The undemocratic nature of the vote. Senators are chosen by the representatives, and the two groups together have generally elected the president, when he did not come to power by revolution. The only chance people have had to vote has been for local officials and representatives. In these cases, the vote has been limited to the élite and the army, with the president's henchmen counting the ballots. Since the Occupation there have been plebiscites on constitutional changes, the people having the right to vote Yes or No.

5. The subservience of the courts to the president. They have been filled with president's men, generally astute enough to consult presidential wishes before handing down a decision. Foreign merchants soon learned that they could expect little "justice" from the courts if their own cause conflicted with special Haitian interests. Foreign diplomats likewise learned that in crises the courts could involve the simplest issue in such verbal complexity that months of patience would be necessary to unwind the red tape.

6. The pliability of "constitutional rights." Freedom of speech and of the press has been notably lacking, although scurrilous attacks on the administration's enemies have often been permitted. Legislators have been expelled. Graft has flourished. In 1833, for example, two representatives were expelled from the House "for systematically opposing the measures of the executive, and persisting in a demand for a statement of public expenditures." A century later a senator was expelled for almost the same reasons.

7. Militarism. Only in this respect is any real change apparent since the American Occupation. The army was always large up to 1915, and so constituted an economic drain as well as a political menace. Generals had great power: they ruled each department and each arrondissement, were subject only to the president, and were at the bottom of every revolutionary movement.[22] Since the Occupation

22. In 1842, when the population was still less than a million, there were in the district governments 9 generals, 63 colonels, 48 lieutenant colonels, 9 captains, 1 lieutenant, and 28 medical officers; and in the standing army 33 colonels, 95 lieutenant colonels, 825 captains, 654 lieutenants, 577 sublieutenants and ensigns, 6,815 noncommissioned officers, and 25 medical officers. The army had 28,000 soldiers and cost about $600,000 a year. See John Candler, *Brief Notes of Hayti*, pp. 66 ff.

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numbers in the army have been radically reduced; yet in that very fact there is the possibility for the only armed persons in Haiti, the present Garde d'Haïti, to effect political coups. But at least the budget is not strained by the salaries of thousands of unnecessary soldiers, as was true in pre-Occupation days.

8. The separation of the masses from government. By providing a minimum of local government, but that fairly effective, the national government has been able to keep the peasants out of all but revolutionary politics. Rural communities have ordinarily got along well enough without formal government, so that the history of Haitian political thought and the analysis of Haitian political forms would treat of affairs interesting to only a fraction of the population.

It need hardly be repeated, after a reflection upon these apparent permanencies of political life, that Haiti is not a democracy.

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XIII

CONSTITUTIONS AND POLITICAL FORMS

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QUITE aside from its castes and the political separation of 1807–20, Haiti has always consisted of two nations, one living in and near the towns and so within reach of established government, the other rural and yet capable of ordering its own affairs by folk rules without much actual governmental machinery. It is through the former that Haiti has a political history. Indeed, one is tempted to say that more than half the people have continually got along without any government whatever of a formal sort, for being peaceably inclined they have found custom and usage [669] sufficient for their needs. These people have been rarely disturbed by the state's rulers; revolutionary chieftains alone have found it worth their while to stir up the country folk to an active interest in politics.

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The formal subdivisions of Haiti have been, through most of its history, three: the *commune*, roughly corresponding to the American township; the *arrondissement*, a group of communes, just as the American county is a group of townships; and the *département*, comprising several arrondissements. All three terms were borrowed from France, although their significance was altered when applied to the Haitian scene.

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In the days of Toussaint, Dessalines, and Christophe, the government had owned vast plantations which were under the control of the military. Pétion and Boyer instituted the commune by combining numerous estates and farms into a group likewise to be controlled by soldiers. Until the American Occupation the police system of the country was military, with ordinary soldiers keeping order and making arrests when necessary. Since few people are less given to disorder than the Haitian peasants, the task of keeping order was not a serious one; indeed, soldiers were frequently stationed among their friends and relatives, who never thought of them as police. It some- [293] times happened, however, that soldiers were assigned to other parts of the country, where they swaggered about with their *cocomacaques* (heavy-jointed canes), using these or the flat of their swords to enforce their often arbitrary commands.

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In every commune recognized by the state was an important

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643 reason of his power to name agents accredited to foreign governments; with the approval of the Senate he made treaties and wars. In cases of malversation, or gross corruption, the president might be denounced by the Senate (his own nominees), and the High Court of Justice (his own appointees) would sit in judgment on him; matters [669] have never reached this pass, however, for the Haitian method of checking a president's "malversation" has been the more direct one of revolution.

643 At a salary generally set in the neighborhood of thirty or forty [465] thousand dollars the president could live luxuriously, the highest-paid person in Haiti. The salary combined with the prestige and [661] perquisites of office was enough to explain the eagerness with which men sought the position. "Perquisites" often enough included graft.

645 Details of administration have been in the hands of various departments of state, their number depending upon the constitution then in force. As has been said, the president generally regarded his cabinet members as little more than clerks to attend to details. Only a few in the whole nineteenth century stand out prominently as directors of policy—Boyer as Pétion's secretary-general; Inginac, holding the same position under Boyer; Anténor Firmin, Hyppolite's foreign secretary; and a handful of others. During the four years, 1843–47, of "ephemeral governments" the cabinet ministers sometimes managed to rule their offices, and under the succession of ignorant Negro generals at the end of the century, if the educated élite secretaries had not taken charge of affairs no one would have handled them. Constitutional language made the cabinet officers seem more important than they were, however, for the actual position of a minister was usually that of head clerk, chief errand boy and handy man for the president, and convenient scapegoat when crises arose in foreign affairs, finances, public works, or other spheres.

646 The legislative body has ordinarily consisted of two chambers, the Senate and the Chamber of Representatives. Senators must be thirty years old. They have ordinarily served a nine-year term, being available for reëlection only after three years out of office. The method of choice curbed their power: the lower house selected each senator from a list of three nominated by the president for each vacancy. For a salary of sixteen hundred dollars and freedom from arrest in civil cases, all the senator had to do was to correspond with the president and lower house on public affairs, and decree appro-

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Cassation at Port-au-Prince. In the event that this court confirmed the judgment of the lower courts, the defendant might still appeal from it to the president, and might apply for a new trial in the lower courts. Thus the contest would proceed ad infinitum, however clear the proof that the debt was just.

The Court of Cassation exceeded all others in the slowness of its judgments. Its judges were under the surveillance of the president, and must consult with him before deciding a case. If he disagreed, and the state was a party to the case, the judges must reconsider "to see if they have not taken a wrong view of the question at issue." Even so, the grand judge might stay execution as long as he deemed advisable after a judgment was confirmed.

Judges were rarely chosen from among trained lawyers, but were appointed by the government because of political considerations. Consequently, few people had any faith in court decisions, and in general they avoided taking their problems to law. The peasants in particular were bewildered by the whole procedure. White foreigners also often complained that unless they were willing to pay heavily they had no slightest chance of getting justice in the Haitian courts.

It must be emphasized that the majority of cases coming before the courts were civil rather than criminal, for it has been a universal matter of comment that the Haitian people were rarely guilty of serious crimes. Minor thefts of poultry or animals have been the commonest breaches of the peace, while murder, arson, and rape have almost never occurred. Even the bitterest critics of the republic have noted the absence of crime.[9] It is noteworthy that, despite their poverty and the hardness of their life, the Haitians are, contrary to the prevailing white man's notion of Negro unreliability, passion, and lawlessness, a tranquil folk. The absence of crime speaks volumes for the wholesomeness of a people much maligned by the stories of their "Voodoo" practices and bloody revolutions. An élite ex-president spoke to me with pride of the honesty of the country people who welcomed travelers with true hospitality and with no expectation of payment. "You might sleep safely in a country cabin with a thousand dollars on your person," he said.[10]

9. Mackenzie, British consul during a part of Boyer's régime, and young Haiti's severest critic, said that during his whole stay he knew of only one murder, and that in this case the assassin was executed.

10. In times of revolution, brigandage was expected but was not accounted a crime, any more than killing in warfare is called murder.

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Saturday to use their time cultivating the soil, pursuing some mechanical craft, or acting as day laborers.

It must be once more emphasized that the civil was everywhere subservient to the military power. The administration of justice in tribunals was carried out only at the pleasure of the army chiefs. No person would have dared bring suit against a high officer; the only efficacious way of obtaining justice against petty offenders was through summary decision and corporal chastisement by the commanding officer.

By the close of Boyer's rule, during which he had kept the army up to its full numbers while pursuing a policy of economy, the outward appearance of the troops was almost ludicrous. They appeared at review wearing generally what pleased them or what they could scrape together, for they had to supply their own clothing and arms. The only effectual employment of the soldiery was as armed police, for Haiti never had to fight external powers. The soldiers drummed and fifed, mustered on parade and went through the formations, but otherwise merely stood (or sat) sentry at the doors of public offices, hunted up at the command of the magistrates *les mauvais sujets*, guarded prisons and prisoners on chain-gang duty, loitered at barriers, collected tolls, and examined permits.

A large army, practically idle, could easily be seduced into the support of revolutionary movements. Principles of discipline and loyalty current in European armies of the day were nonexistent in nineteenth-century Haiti. The numbers in the army varied from twenty to forty or fifty thousand. A strange estimate was made for the year 1867: 6,500 general officers and staff; 7,000 regimental officers; and only 6,500 soldiers.[15] It was said that "*tout Haïtien qui n'était pas général de division était au moins soldat.*" The higher grades became rewards for political service; the lower ranks had to be filled up by recruiting parties—when these were abroad, all men who did not desire a period of enforced leisure away from home remained in hiding.

While the army was not alone responsible for the tragedies of insurrection and mismanagement which consistently befell the country, it was never uninvolved in these misfortunes. Only the radical reforms undertaken by the American Occupation saved modern Haiti from continued military domination.

15. Sir Spenser St. John, *Hayti, or the Black Republic*, p. 310.

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quarantine: "Haiti for the Haitians." At first the prohibition on white ownership of land and financial investment in the country was attributable to a fear of reënslavement; then to a fear that financial commitments (which no Haitian really understood) would somehow lead to political subjection; and always the feeling of pride, combined with a desperate need of self-justification, made the Haitians want to keep their country entirely under control of their own people. It is, of course, possible that if white people had been allowed free access to the country, they might have destroyed the "Black Republic"; excluding white men altogether, however, seriously curtailed economic activity.

2. Overmilitarization. The army, numerous out of all proportion to the population, took the ablest men out of production, drained the treasury, and was a constant source of revolutionary activity.

3. Poor methods of agriculture. Critics often complained that Haiti ought to return to the system of large estates and forced labor; it apparently occurred to no one to suggest that education of the peasants might have made the land productive once more, by teaching the people new methods. Dividing up the land was an inevitable necessity unless every ruler were as willing as Christophe to be a dictator and as capable; but to keep the peasants in ignorance was not a necessity. Peasant landowners in Europe frequently tend their acres with skill, while in Haiti, with neither experience nor instruction in methods of tillage on small farms, the people developed steadily more destructive ways of farming.

4. Inefficient marketing. Assuming Haiti's dependence upon the staple crop of coffee and the handling of this crop by foreign merchants, every government seemed intent upon putting obstacles in the path of efficient marketing procedure.[15] The white trader could deal only with Haitians (who were ignorant in matters of international trade); although the foreigner had to pay a huge license fee in order to deal at all in Haitian products, he got no security in return, for he might not own land or obtain a lien on the real property of a citizen.[16] Banking and exchange facilities were wholly lacking.

15. In 1833 Boyer thought to "encourage" Haitians to commercial effort by gradually expelling foreign traders, refusing to grant them any new licenses to trade. His scheme failed, for the élite were not interested. Indeed, the actual effect of his plan was to disrupt the steady flow of exports and increase discontent with Boyer on the part of the élite plantation owners whose small profits were momentarily interrupted.

16. See James Franklin, *The Present State of Hayti*, pp. 374 ff.

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not find herself constantly embroiled with European states and American financial interests. The Haitian debt was funded, and a financial adviser remained in the country even after the Occupation came to an end. It is expected that by 1943 the last debt will be paid; the financial adviser, however, withdrew in 1941. Since the Occupation, although the republic has been free to manage her own affairs, she has consulted frequently with the State Department in Washington.

Nineteen years of occupation ended the century of Haitian isolation. The Americans built roads, conducted health campaigns, made their presence felt even in remote hamlets and valleys. American authors, political, romantic, and sensational, discovered the Antillean republic. Steamship companies stopped their cruises for a few hours at Cap-Haïtien to allow tourists to visit the Citadel, and at Port-au-Prince to see the sights of the capital. Every Haitian now realizes that there is a world outside.

Whatever crises have arisen in Haitian affairs, certain problems have persisted. For whom do they constitute a source of worry? Since the government has always been a dictatorship, limited or absolute, subject to no party control, the incumbents of office have never had the experience of being constantly reminded by their opponents of the misery or daily worries of the population. After a hundred years the people have learned that relief is not to be expected from politicians. Occasionally a dramatic revolutionary leader has persuaded some of the people that the officials in power were responsible for their distress, and so worked up a following; yet even when such movements succeeded, the masses never benefited. To most governments of the past century Haiti's problem has been only one: to frustrate insurrection. There is evidence that recent administrations have busied themselves assiduously with the country's internal problems, although none of them has been adequately solved. The élite, at least as a group, do not feel any apparent responsibility for the maladjustments, nor obligation to effect the necessary reforms. A few patriots, and those almost without exception not in office, know what ails the country and say so; a smaller number propose reasonable solutions. The problems remain. Of these the three outstanding are overpopulation with all its accompanying ills, health, and education.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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[p. 315]

NOTES

CHAPTER II

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The period between 1789 and 1803 may be summarized as follows: [585]

1789–1791. Struggle for precedence between whites and free colored people, with the balance in favor of the whites.

1791–1793. The slave insurrection, with consequent anarchy, and futile attempts of French commissioners to restore order. Both whites and colored people pushed into the background. [669] [563]

1793–1796. Invasion of the colony by English and Spanish; rise of the mulatto general Rigaud and the black general Toussaint. [648]

1796–1799. Consolidation of power by Toussaint; defeat and expulsion of Rigaud; emigration of whites. [643]

1799–1802. Toussaint in full power as governor-general.

1802–1803. Leclerc's expedition, with its initial successes and ultimate failure. Final achievement of Haitian independence under Dessalines and Christophe. [642]

PART III

Various efforts were made by American abolitionists working with Haitian presidents to colonize freed American Negro slaves in Haiti in the period before the Civil War.[1] All these projects came to unfortunate ends, some even to grimly tragic ones. During Boyer's time about 13,000 American Negroes went to Haiti, the government assigning to each family a portion of land upon its arrival. Very shortly most of those who could afford it returned to this country, and within ten years hardly one was still living upon the land. An American writer, Hunt, says that during his seventeen years in Haiti (before 1860) he had known of but 13 Negroes from America who had been moderately successful; of these, 7 were merchants or traders, 4 mechanics, and 2 lawyers; and all were mulattoes. Five others were barely independent, and all the rest were day laborers or worse. In spite of this, Hunt planned another aided migration of American Negroes to Haiti. Warning them not to expect too much in the way of improvements in agriculture, he adds a significant paragraph: "Should the immigrant obtain quiet possession of unoccupied lands, and begin to use the plough instead of the hoe, his new methods of culture would be likely to draw upon him the jealousy and ill-will of his neighbors. For when new ways are *too* new to be accepted as an example, they are very apt to be felt and resented as a rebuke. More than one of Boyer's old immigrants have told me that they were obliged to give up agriculture and take to trading in towns, on account of annoyances of this sort. They found their fences down, or their water let off, of a morning; or evidences that cattle had been fed on their grounds over night; or the neighboring idlers, of which there are many, had stolen all their plantains and sweet potatoes, fit for the market. I do not mean to say that here Haytian cultivators are worse than any other rude people. On the contrary, I

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1. An excellent description of these projects is found in L. L. Montague, *Haiti and the United States, 1714–1938* (Durham, 1940), chap. IV.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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3. *Pétion, Boyer, and Inginac as Administrators*

Pétion lived very simply in the South, like a plain republican magistrate. He sat on his piazza, accessible to all his people. He had a quiet way of answering his opponents which did not make enemies of them. He made his secretary answer every letter that arrived, no matter how small; many were simply inquiries about the President's health. Yet the wars between Pétion and Christophe dragged on from 1807 to 1812,[8] draining the finances of the republic. Not only the crops declined: so also did most of the public improvements instituted by the colonial planters; so did trade; so did habits of industry. Everything seemed to conspire against hard work. The rich plains of the Cul-de-Sac and the Artibonite Valley were ravaged by fire and warfare; necessary equipment for sugar making was destroyed, the money for new machines and buildings was unavailable; and the men were drawn away from their land by military duties.

Inginac, Boyer's secretary of state, after the Revolution of 1843 had got rid of both the President and his secretary, wrote his memoirs. There are some revealing passages. Inginac reports that Pétion told him only forty days before his death that Boyer was a man of probity and delicacy, "but unhappily he is petulant; he is too set in his ways to conciliate those who might assist him. In everything *he* wants to dominate, and he will bring unhappiness to the country if he does not change." Inginac cites cases to show that Pétion's prophecy was correct. Boyer in 1820 repealed the most unpopular laws, particularly those requiring personal corvée and the repair of public roads; but instead of taking advice from his cabinet on important economic matters, he frequently announced that he was president and would not be run by anybody. Consequently, according to Inginac, he made mistakes which might have been avoided.[9] Defending himself, the former secretary offers a clue to the failure of the *régime*—possibly unavoidable—by showing that the administration merely suggested, did not require, action:

"Have I not constantly, not only preached and corresponded about the necessity of making agriculture prosperous, but also given work at as high wages as the treasury could afford? Have I not created habitations on lands formerly totally uncultivated, putting formerly idle men to work? Have I not published at my own expense, although I directed the National Printery, methods for cultivating tobacco and coffee plants, of which I distributed gratis several thousand copies?"[10]

In spite of all encouragement which the administration could offer, agricultural production continued to decline, while expenses increased, and external trade fell off from a third to a half. The government had to borrow from the banking firm of Lafitte in Paris to find even the interest for

8. Hostilities between the two parts of Haiti ceased about 1812 because of the mutual fear on the part of Christophe and Pétion of Napoleon's ascendancy, and the threat which this constituted to the whole former colony. Their war had ravaged the plantations and removed laborers from the soil. Then came the War of 1812 between the United States and Great Britain, cutting off many of the supplies which Haiti drew from both countries. There was accordingly an unwritten truce, with no further hostilities. A neutral territory of ten leagues between the boundaries of the two states was tacitly agreed upon: neither army was to enter it. This was the rich plain of Beaucoin, once the garden of the island, now a wilderness.

9. Joseph Balthazar Inginac, *Mémoires* (Kingston, Jamaica, 1843), pp. 32, 34, 38.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

payments due to the French government.